

TRADE AND INTERACTION ON THE EASTERN CAPE FRONTIER:  
AN HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE XHOSA AND THE  
BRITISH DURING THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

By

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by

Flordeliz T. Bugarin

This is dedicated to Cris Bugarin, my mom, Tem Bugarin, my father, and Marie Bugarin, my sister. Thank you for being the family that supports me. Also, this is in memory of my Uncle Jack who died while I was in South Africa.

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School  
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By

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The early nineteenth century on the Eastern Cape frontier is a period of expanding trade and interaction between the South African Xhosa and the British settlers. On the frontier, the British established some of the first official trade fairs at Fort Willshire. They restricted trade throughout the Eastern Cape to this one location and considered all other trade illegal. By centralizing economic exchange, they were establishing tighter controls on cultural interaction and trying to confront increasing political tension.

The Fort Willshire Trade Fairs directly affected Xhosa and British economic systems, everyday life, political and social structures, and ideology. Understanding how culture changed in this region is important because it demonstrates how two groups came to terms with their changing environments. It also brings to light how a tenacious indigenous society was drawn into a colonial economy and influenced to relinquish its autonomy.

Through an analysis of the landscape, oral traditions, written records, and archaeological evidence, my research investigates the effects of trade and evolving economies on the everyday lives of these South Africans. My work looks at how nineteenth century trade goods changed the everyday practices of these people and thus stimulated culture change.

Two years of research in South Africa revealed important insights. The archaeological assemblage defined the site as a significant center for the bead and horn trade. A layer of cattle horn cores covered with glass seed beads was discovered in the trade fair grounds. The archaeological data also provided insights on the diet of traders and their use of the local environment. Oral traditions presented a different perspective of history in relation to the region. They revealed that a series of migrations dramatically changed the cultural landscape over time. They provided a political and social history of the chiefdom that moved into the area once the fairs closed and they illustrated indigenous meanings placed on the natural environment. The archival research colored in the background details of the landscape, documenting the participating traders, British official policies, and a colonial description of the indigenous traders.

The Fort Willshire and Keiskamma River Valley project made significant contributions to historical archaeology as practiced in South Africa and in other parts of the world. By combining multi-methodological techniques and blending theoretical perspectives, it looked at the impact of trade on local economies, different worldviews, and everyday practices.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The South African Eastern Cape has been the cradle of resistance throughout the history of contact between indigenous Xhosa and colonial people (figure 1.1). This characterization refers to the direct challenges and unremitting struggles of the Xhosa against colonialism, European hegemony, and foreign intrusion on their land and its resources. The resiliency and strength of the Xhosa alarmed the British during a series of violent frontier wars in the early nineteenth century. Their tenacity later formed a foundation for the fight against apartheid in the twentieth century, and today their determination continues to support their fight for social equality.

In the nineteenth century, Xhosa traders served as active agents that critically shaped the colonial social order on a daily basis, while inadvertently facilitating colonial domination in the long term. Indigenous strategies that envisioned a consolidated Xhosa kingdom for the future were undermined by more immediate competition for material wealth and political power. As individual chiefs maneuvered their positions to gain control over resources, they sought political alliances that further separated chiefdoms. By investing in colonial resources, they gained colonial military support against other chiefdoms. They also established material wealth by controlling the value of goods that were redistributed to other Xhosa people.

Once the Xhosa became dependent on the colonial economy, they could no longer avoid being incorporated into the colonial social system. After being integrated into this system, they were more easily co-opted as a cheap labor source during the Mining

Revolution, and stripped of their independence. Eventually, this led directly to their subjugation under apartheid.

The early nineteenth century in the Eastern Cape is a pivotal period in the history of the Xhosa people. Understanding how acculturation occurred in this region is important because it demonstrates how a steadfast and tenacious society was drawn into a colonial economy and influenced to relinquish autonomy. Through an analysis of the landscape, oral traditions, written records, and archaeological evidence, this study investigates the effects of trade and interaction in a period of significant cultural change on the Eastern Cape frontier.

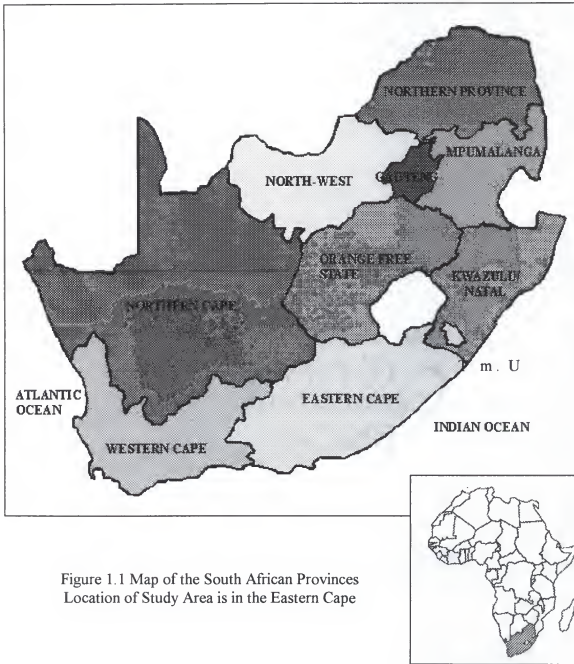
### **The Research Project**

In their attempt to control trade, the British established some of the first official trade fairs at Fort Willshire on the banks of the Keiskamma River. They restricted trade throughout the entire Eastern Cape to this one location and considered all other trade illegal. By centralizing economic exchange, they were establishing tighter controls on cultural interaction and trying to confront increasing political tension. This was a direct response to a series of damaging frontier wars and continuous cattle raids (Peires 1982, Crais 1992, Switzer 1993, Cory 1913).

Overall, they turned the Keiskamma River Valley into a geographical boundary and gateway between the 1820 British Settlers and the indigenous Xhosa people. The trade fair events were thus the means through which colonial material culture flowed into the Eastern Cape, and colonial influences penetrated Xhosa culture.

The main goal of the colonial government was to control indigenous behavior in order to gain unlimited access to the material resources and economic wealth of the region. Colonial officials wanted ivory, cattle, and land (Peires 1982, Crais 1992).





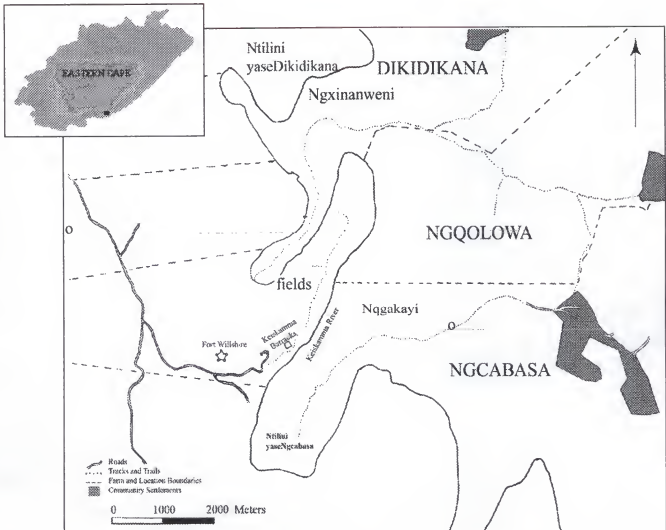


Figure 1.2 Map of Fort Willshire, Bordering Xhosa Locations, and the Keiskamma River

The colony's main subsistence strategy involved cattle ranching on large areas of land. The Xhosa also depended on their own cattle based economy. As a result, both sides were constantly faced with a shortage of land and regular cattle theft. In response, the colony restricted the growth of towns, thereby indirectly limiting opportunities for settlers to do other things besides cattle ranching. This circular cycle exacerbated the situation.

The expansion of the frontier thus depended on the development of the economy of the settled areas which in turn depended on the fortunes of the Company and of the economy of Europe in general (Omer-Cooper 1994:25).

The Fort Willshire Trade Fairs and the Keiskamma River itself became a means to redistribute the wealth of the region back to Europe and ensure the fortunes of the Colonial Company. In addition, the government ensured the availability of goods it valued and established strict boundaries and policies on the Xhosa people.

The Xhosa, on the other hand, also wanted to manipulate the situation to their advantage. Their goal was to retain control over their land. Some chiefs saw an alliance with the colonial government as an opportunity to maintain this control, obtain power over other chiefdoms, and to gain material benefits. Further from the border of the ceded territory, an area designated as a buffer zone between colonial populations and the Xhosa kingdom, others were able to maintain their political strength and resist dependence on colonial resources. Dependence on colonial goods and military strength seemed directly related to the proximity of the chiefdom to the colonial border.

Only after many damaging wars, devastating natural disasters, migratory population pressures, and the division of political and social structures, did most of the Xhosa find that the solutions to their circumstances depended upon the colonial economy. These events put pressures on the availability of viable grazing lands. Without land, they could no longer sustain large cattle herds and support their increasing population. Once

this situation was established, they relied on the colony for alternative sources of labor and increased access to colonial monetary resources. Dependence on the colony subsequently facilitated colonial interests.

The Fort Willshire trade fairs were a central part of this process (see figure 3.1). They directly affected Xhosa economic systems, everyday life, political and social structures, and ideology. Various Xhosa individuals saw the fairs as a means to more wealth, social mobility, and political advancement. For many, the fairs also meant that European everyday goods were being continuously incorporated into their daily lives. My dissertation looks at how trade goods in general changed the everyday practices of the Xhosa people as well as European traders.

### **Research Background**

With every exchange of highly valued colonial commodities such as beads and buttons, Xhosa traders were required to trade for everyday items such as cloth, iron pots, blankets, and tinder boxes (Peires 1982:100). Although the Xhosa resisted these everyday goods, they kept returning to the fairs mainly for the European beads. With increasing numbers of beads being funneled into the Xhosa kingdom as a portable monetary equivalent for cattle, Xhosa traders were able to extend indigenous trade routes and travel further distances.

Cattle were previously the primary unit of currency. They were a measure of wealth and political power. In everyday life, the Xhosa considered cattle the center of many traditional, religious, and ideological practices. Cattle were the basis of subsistence strategies and the family unit. They were the means to rights over marriage and fertility. As cattle remained economically and symbolically important, beads signified this

importance and played a key role in changing the overall Xhosa economic system. Beads became the economic and symbolic representations of cattle.

We can see the value of beads and cattle clearly in the archaeological record at Fort Willshire. Beads and cattle played a central role at the fairs and in nineteenth century colonial and indigenous interaction. The Keiskamma River Valley project was designed to elucidate these and other relationships, as well as to investigate how material culture and activities on the landscape expressed the nature of trade, economy, and cultural change. The project also incorporated a variety of complementary and contradicting sources. These allowed for more comprehensive explanations of specific everyday events occurring in the Keiskamma River Valley.

### **Contributions to the Discipline**

This research is significant to historical archaeology because it explains acculturation by investigating the economic conditions of a region, while simultaneously examining and opening up alternative perspectives on the historiography on the nineteenth century. Historical archaeologists have highlighted the serious limitations of written documents, a result of the lack of historical production from non-literate societies and the preponderance of colonial perspectives (Schmidt and Patterson 1995, Schrire 1995, Ferguson 1992, Deagan 1991, Deetz 1977). Addressing these problems, some of these scholars claim that archaeology and history together provide contextual and material evidence that contributes to a more inclusive view of history. Despite the vast information we can learn from written documents, there is valuable information that cannot be discovered from them (Deetz 1996). Xhosa oral traditions provide an indigenous perspective of the land, illustrate chronological complexity in terms of

migrations throughout the region, and aid in the identification of archaeological activity areas. From the archaeological record, we gain tangible access to everyday material goods. We often learn more about production of trade goods and methods of discard. Archaeology frequently reflects cultural, temporal, and spatial relations as seen through patterns of behavior on the landscape.

Archaeology also gives us a look at people commonly forgotten in the written record, people such as African-American slave populations, indigenous people, and populations without a system of written history. Archaeology also provides information about the materials used in everyday contexts. We gain access to materials that are rarely recorded in written documents.

Simple people doing simple things, the normal, everyday routine of life and how these people thought about it, are not the kinds of things anyone thought worthy of noting (Deetz 1977:8).

In the written record, commonplace items were sometimes overlooked in favor of more exotic and valuable goods (Deetz 1996). Museums, the traditional keepers of historical artifacts, normally display the jewels of royal families over the broken plates of the common poor. The things that could chronicle a day in the life of an everyday person were often thrown away in rubbish bins (Rathje 1974). In addition, officials with ulterior motives occasionally buried information as they constructed official records. The archaeological record addresses these forgotten histories.

Both archaeology and history are academic disciplines that are dominated by Western scholars' theories and interpretations (Schmidt and Patterson 1995, Olsen 1991, Renfrew and Bahn 1991). As a remedy to this, archaeologists often strive to overcome this biased perspective by incorporating non-Western understandings of material culture

(Schmidt 1997, 1990, 1983, 1978, Longacre 1991, Hodder 1982, Miller 1985, Hayden and Cannon 1983).

Historical archaeology's focus on colonial populations coupled with a denial of non-Westerner's contributions in the past results in an active erasure of non-Western history (Schmidt and Patterson 1995). Moreover, many historians who research the contact period in the Eastern Cape have overlooked the value of archaeological evidence. Some have relied mainly on colonial written sources (i.e., Alberti 1968, Beck 1987, Coetzee 1995, Crais 1992, Stapleton 1994). Still others argue that archaeologists fail to produce useful material for the understanding of indigenous life (Peires 1982). In some ways, this appears accurate in the Eastern Cape.

Archaeologists need to produce more work on the recent history of indigenous Xhosa people. Discussing the formation of state societies, Martin Hall (1990a:126) argues that insufficient archaeological research prevents us from discerning the forces behind the expansion and incorporation of the Xhosa paramount.

There are insights we can obtain from the Eastern Cape that can contribute a broader understanding of global cultural processes. A history built solely upon oral traditions and colonial documents or solely upon archaeological methods and colonial documents misses these opportunities. A history of this type results in an incomplete and biased picture of the past. The involvement of Xhosa people in the research of their own pasts provides new data for archaeological endeavors. Scholars can produce a more inclusive history of the Eastern Cape by integrating indigenous contributions with archaeological evidence and written sources.

## Significance of Research

The political and social relations of South Africans have had a profound impact on both historiography and archaeology. To further the cause of political agendas, policies of segregation, interests of a white minority over those of black Africans, and the objectives of capitalism, some scholars have used historical and archaeological data to manipulate their representation of the past (see Hall 1990b, Dean et al. 1983). South African scholars themselves recognize this problem (Schrire 1995, Saunders 1988).

Since the making of South African history is largely in the hands of white scholars, black African interests are often divorced from historical interpretations based on archaeological materials. Archaeology often marginalizes black Africans from their past. In South Africa, it is often the case that black South Africans have never heard of archaeology, or have never been to a museum to see archaeological exhibits. Without an opportunity to learn about the results of archaeological investigations, new generations of black South Africans lose this particular link to their own history. In addition, some scholars have used archaeological data to justify and support racist beliefs, and minimize or erase an African past in order to present a history that essentially begins with white colonial settlement (see Schmidt and Patterson 1995, Hall 1990b).

The making of southern African history has been largely a political endeavor. Archaeology has been used to support dominant colonial ideologies and political agendas such as apartheid. In a study on the roles of history textbooks in the shaping of South African consciousness, Dean et al. (1983) conclude that:

The view of the past offered by the textbooks is consistent with, and frequently actively supportive of, the continuation of present racial policies. There is little doubt that the history syllabus is designed partly with the intention of cultivating attitudes favourable to the maintenance of the system of racial inequality....We have been concerned with the end products, the textbooks, and it is sufficient that



these should embody values consistent with official apartheid doctrine for them to be regarded as potentially ideological in their impact.

In some instances this legitimang tendency is quite direct, as when the system of apartheid is described approvingly and the arguments for it directly endorsed. More commonly, however, and perhaps more insidiously, legitimang operates indirectly when the textbooks encourage beliefs, attitudes and values that are part of the intellectual underpinning of the apartheid system or that form part of a world-view into which apartheid fits naturally (102-103).

Textbooks indoctrinated students into a history built through the eyes of the colonial white settler. Early historians perpetuated colonial beliefs by ignoring the contributions of archaeological research and assuming that southern Africa was sparsely populated before European contact. They also employed Social Darwinism, which was a theory built upon racial inequality and the belief that human societies could be ranked from savages and barbarians to a highly evolved status of civilization. Others focused on scientific classifications of artifacts rather than the people who made them. All of these acts made indigenous South Africans seem as if they were victims of colonial aggression rather than active contributors to social change (see Deacon 1990, Hall 1990a, Hall 1990b). These manipulations of archaeological data created an image of black Africans that marginalized them from history. Urban development, technological advance, and monumental architecture were attributed to foreign influence. By denying Africans their history or recreating it through a colonial lens, white scholars were constructing an ideology that justified appropriation of land, supported apartheid, and defined Africans as the "lazy Kafir" (see Atkins 1993).

The majority of contemporary southern Africans are at best a "people without history"; at worst they are the victims of a prejudiced view that has more to do with the justification for domination than with understanding the past" (Hall 1990:viii).

Africans were seen as being incapable of contributing in an active way to political, social, and economic advancements in southern Africa.

Lack of Iron Age research during the apartheid era exemplified the use of archaeology to further the interests of those with political and economic power. The trend was to support Social Darwinism, overall a racial ideology that justified colonial domination over indigenous South Africans. Early historians G.M. Theal (1907) and G.W. Stow (1905) explained culture by arguing that indigenous people were incapable of stimulating advanced technological developments (see Saunders 1988 for discussion of racial myths and Theal's legacy). Others claimed that it was the responsibility of those people higher up on the evolutionary scale to bring civilization to the less fortunate. Referring to the role of Christianity as a means to improve the living conditions of the "savages," Rev. William C. Holden (1963) states:

those who would raise the barbarian and the savage into the position of industrious, healthy, happy beings, must have a point from which to start, and a base on which to operate, otherwise nothing effectual can be done.

The child of nature, the denizen of the wilds of South Africa, *prefers his own mode of living to that of the civilized man* (486-487).

These same colonial biases structured the interpretations of the Bantu migrations. Arguing that Bantu-speaking people arrived in South Africa at the same time that Europeans settled and expanded throughout the region, historians lent credence to the notion that viable land was previously unoccupied and free for European settlement (see Hall 1990a, 1990b, Maggs 1976). Referring to the assumption that Bantu-speaking people and the Iron Age complex arrived in South Africa only within the last four centuries, Tim Maggs states:

This assumption of a late and short Iron Age chronology, although seldom explicitly stated, was strong enough to distort the outlook of both historian and archaeologist, and to make the field of Iron Age research a relatively unattractive one compared with the long and rich Stone Age sequence (1976:xiv).

Since apartheid ideology dictated many of the topics of archaeological interest temporally distant from Iron Age studies, it played a role in the active erasure of a past that took into account the immediate history of black Africans.

On the one hand was a popular colonial consciousness, heavily influenced by the economy and ideology of domination. Opposed were a small group of archaeologists, whose methodological standards were drawn from the international scholastic community, but who were themselves also part of the dominating group. For the latter, this contradiction in their position was often accommodated in one of two ways: by avoiding the contested ground and researching less controversial periods of antiquity, or by retreating into highly technical analyses which effectively excluded all but the acolytes of the profession (Hall 1990b:63).

The studies of Great Zimbabwe, the early explanations of Bantu Migrations, and the lack of attention to Iron Age sites supported a paradigm of foreign innovation, the "settler myth", and colonial justification of domination and a right to establish a system of capitalism at the expense of traditional lifeways (Garlake 1982; also see Hall 1990a:6). The "settler paradigm" supported the claim that "African societies were incapable of change and that the continent had a glorious, and long-lost history of colonization by earlier civilizations" (Hall 1990a:6).

Although this paradigm pervaded many of the early histories of southern Africa, it was dismissed by later archaeological and historical research. While some current scholars are still influenced by remnants of apartheid ideology (as observed by their own South African colleagues), many have made concerted efforts to expose and redress biases of the early South African historians (Hall 1990b, Schrire 1995).

Colonial assumptions and biases are being broken down by a growing attention to Iron Age studies and attempts to relate archaeological data to interpretations of the "Bantu migrations" (i.e. Huffman 1996, 1989, 1979, Mason 1986, Maggs 1977, Hall 1990b). Iron Age research has pushed back the date of indigenous African settlements in

South Africa, thus contesting the false assumption that European colonists and indigenous African populations arrived in South Africa around the same time (see Mason 1986). Archaeological research demonstrates that “Bantu” populations were present in Southern Africa since at least AD 200 (Hall 1990a, also see Maggs 1977, Hall and Vogel 1980, Parkington and Hall 1987).

Recognizing the influence of colonial ideology on the practice of archaeology and hence the production of written history, scholars are now making concerted efforts to include African voices and interest in their research (Hall et al. 1984, Hall 1990a, 1990b). They are taking multi-disciplinary approaches that include ethnoarchaeology and oral traditions, and making critical analysis of their own cultural backgrounds (Schrire 1995). As archaeologists directly confront how colonial ideology has led to the erasure of history, perhaps they can produce research that is accepted by indigenous communities. The current absence of oral traditions in archaeological interpretations suggests that archaeologists are reluctant to recognize the potentials of oral traditions for their research.

Overall, political and ideological agendas have led to the avoidance of certain topics such as the archaeology of the contact period in the Eastern Cape, the creation of an archaeology that is so jargon laden that it is unintelligible beyond the profession, and the systematic erasure of African histories. On the other hand, current ideologies that employ more blended theoretical approaches have also contributed to the direct breakdown of colonial biases and political goals. Those that combine symbolic and cognitive approaches with materialist, scientific, and processual positions can better incorporate indigenous voices while still achieving scientific explanations. Recognizing the problems of past scholarship, archaeologists are now trying to make conscious and

direct efforts to disseminate archaeological knowledge to a wider audience and to question continuously their own cultural assumptions.

### **Dissertation Organization**

I discuss the theoretical foundation of my research in Chapter 2. My position advocates blending materialist perspectives with symbolic and cognitive interpretations. I also discuss economic theory and the archaeological literature on trade and exchange. I define historical archaeology, discuss the development of the discipline within a South African context, and argue for a more global perspective. Historical archaeology is more than just a colonial endeavor, and as such it often overlaps with other practices of archaeology such as Iron Age archaeology. I argue that the future success of historical archaeology is predicated upon incorporating indigenous concerns, recognizing the value of a theoretical middle ground, and critically examining our traditional definitions of historical archaeology.

Chapter 3 presents the nineteenth century history of the Eastern Cape, the contact period between the Xhosa and the British, and the historical events specifically occurring in the Keiskamma River Valley. This region is characterized by a series of migrations, population pressures, and various political and social changes. Many of these forces were directly related to the changing roles of trade in the region, the relationships between Europeans and indigenous peoples, and the strategies that people developed when competing for resources. Inquiring into these relationships, I investigate the histories of every group who had settled in this Keiskamma River Valley, from the Nqika Xhosa to the Gqunukwebe Xhosa, including the Khoi, as well as the various European participants, such as missionaries and farmers. I explore their roles in relation to the

changing economic and social conditions of the region. Chapter 3 chronicles the social history of this area, introduces the history of the environment, and describes the differences as well as changes in the landscape of my study area.

Chapter 4 focuses on Xhosa oral traditions. I review my field methods, describe the traditions, and present my interpretations of this information within the context of the economic and social history of the region. In Chapters 5 and 6, I examine the archaeological evidence. Chapter 5 discusses my archaeological survey and excavation methods, while Chapter 6 describes my archaeological findings.

In Chapter 7, I integrate the evidence from the archival sources, oral traditions, and archaeological research, seeking to reveal complementary observations as well as trying to explain anomalies that lead to particularly important insights. This chapter presents my interpretations, reviews the significance of the evidence, and discusses how this project contributes to our understanding of culture change. I review the concerns that Xhosa elders conveyed when presented with my research proposal. Many felt that this was a prime opportunity to voice current problems, twentieth century history, and their own personal struggles against apartheid. Others wanted to discuss their grievances over land rights, convey occasional tensions in their relationship with the Game Reserve, and express their requests for aid and more resources from a wider audience. These current concerns are historically tied to those of their ancestors who appeared in the area nearly 200 years ago. The Xhosa chairmen of each location saw my presence as a way to get financial donators from foreign countries. This chapter also discusses the issues, ethics, and responsibilities I had to face when working with the Xhosa community.

In the final chapter, Chapter 8, I draw together all of the preceding chapters into a synthetic discussion of the implications of my research for South African history and

archaeology. A successful future for South African archaeology lies in its ability to offer explanations of cultural change, readdress the biases of scholars in the past, and offer a more inclusive history that is identifiable to all South Africans. I conclude with my recommendations for future research in the Eastern Cape, with particular focus on the Keiskamma River Valley. To help broaden our knowledge of South African history and our overall understanding of economic change, cultural interaction, and culture itself, it seems that we can gain much from a multi-disciplinary focus. The future directions of scholarship should aim at the integration of archaeology, cultural anthropology, and history, with the goal to develop more comprehensive explanations of culture change.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE RESEARCH APPROACH: DEFINITIONS, THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE, AND EXPLANATORY FRAMEWORK

Archaeologists approach historical archaeology from many different perspectives, and often debate the central tenets of the discipline. This diverse agenda has led to a wide array of projects that are often placed in seemingly unrelated disciplines such as Iron Age archaeology, Egyptology, Native American archaeology, urban archaeology, classical archaeology, industrial archaeology, and Post-medieval archaeology. While these sub-sections of archaeology investigate different historical contexts, they theoretically overlap in many ways. By defining our practice narrowly, we run the risk of isolating ourselves from the dialogue needed to form a concrete future for historical archaeology. Historical archaeology has the potential to significantly contribute to a better understanding of culture. A successful future for historical archaeology depends on our collective effort and collaboration.

Research directions that seem most beneficial to the social sciences focus on the contact period, indigenous culture change, trade and economic systems, and changes in the lives of everyday people (those other than political leaders, the wealthy, and the elite). Historical archaeologists work with sources that provide unique insights about the poor, and most importantly the people not often included in the written record. In addition, success as a flourishing discipline depends on our abilities to relate our research to the needs and concerns of people today. Although directed towards South African historical



archaeology, Gabbabah Abrahams's (1984) observations may apply to the profession on a global scale:

Historical archeology does not deal with the deep irretrievable past, but with "us", modern society and its direct historical foundation. That is, it deals with the people, places and processes tied in history to the modern world, to modern South Africa. Historical archaeology produces artefacts closely related to modern material culture which contemporary society may easily relate to as an historical extension of the present (21).

Confronting the social conditions of today, archaeologists can build an historical archaeology that better represents and explains culture. Scholars need to create a history in which everyday people can see their own pasts and thus easily relate to the scholarship overall. We are in a good position to redress the inadequacies of the historiography, provide a written past for those communities without a written tradition, and consequently improve the lives of certain populations.

As particular topics define a relevant domain for historical archaeologists, coherent theoretical foundations define pertinent research directions. Historical archaeology is anthropology (South 1977, Schuyler 1970, Mrozowski 1988). As such, its goals should be in line with the goal of finding explanations for culture and culture change.

Within this chapter, I present my definition of historical archaeology, and place my research problem within the context of South African research. I also identify the theory that guides my research design and interpretations. Advocating a theoretical framework based on the synthesis of material and ideological causal mechanisms, I use theories on trade and economic exchange coupled with cognitive and symbolic perspectives. In this way, I hope to show that historical archaeology is more than just a method used to describe colonial artifacts. The future of historical archaeology as a

discipline must involve improving our understanding of the immediate past, providing explanations of culture change, and addressing historically ignored yet critical events in the lives of everyday people. In addition, we must take a global perspective, one in which comparative analysis derives comprehensive understandings of culture overall.

### **Historical Archaeology in a Global Context**

Historical archaeology has been defined in many different ways. From the beginning, archaeologists disagreed over the directions and names that would best describe their shared archaeological practice (Pilling 1967, Schuyler 1970, Larrabee 1969). Some defined the discipline by the sources they used and the topics they covered. They used written documents to look at colonial Europeans and the impact they had on other people. Disagreement arose when they discussed appropriate names for their discipline, names such as: "historical archaeology" (Deetz 1989), "colonial archaeology" (Noel Hume 1969:5, 1991), or "historic sites archaeology" (Schuyler 1988). In 1937, J.C. Harrington remembers disparaging epithets such as "tin-can archaeology" (1994:5). He recalls the struggle to find a name:

Eventually this animal would acquire a name, but in the early days of historical archaeology we were content to extend the term "archaeology" to what we were doing at Jamestown and at other historic sites. But it soon became apparent that we could talk about this process of interrelating archaeological and documentary evidence with greater clarity if it had an identifying label. For a while we got along with calling our work "a new approach," "a new application of archaeological methods," and even "a new discipline." Always with the adjective "new."

I can still recall us sitting around the Frank Setzlers' kitchen table in the late 1930s discussing what to call this thing that we were doing at Jamestown. Frank followed this up in an article, published in 1943, in which he considered the titles "historic archaeology" and "colonial archaeology," but he was not happy with either (quite properly). Finally, in 1948, I faced the matter squarely in my contribution to the Fay-Cooper Cole memorial volume (*Archaeology of Eastern United States*), and opted for "Historic Site Archaeology." This name caught on,

both because it was logical and because no one had come up with a better one (1994:13).

While "Historic Site Archaeology" did eventually lose popularity, many ended up adopting the title, "Historical Archaeology". According to Harrington (1994), it was easier to say.

Once a name was coined, further debates questioned whether the origins of this new archaeology belonged in history or anthropology. Where could historical archaeology make the most beneficial contributions? Debates arose on the profession's meaning and the topics it encompassed. Does it involve histories of people without written documents? Does it allow for oral traditions or ethnoarchaeology? Is it focused on colonial sites and colonial artifacts? Some argued that it must include non-European colonizers and other societies with alternative writing systems (Schmidt 1978). In theory, many considered alternative historical sources in the definition of historical archaeology. In practice, however, they often relegated these matters to extraneous concerns, making them peripheral areas of interest and thus not a regular part of historical archaeological research. As practiced in North America, most research involved sites that in some way involved written documents in their interpretation and focused on colonial sites. All of these contentions, arising from the origins of historical archaeology, its practice, and defining relevant topics, led to a crisis of identity within the discipline and various different practices of the profession itself.

Some archaeologists, such as Ivor Noel Hume (1969, 1991), emphasize the primary importance of written documents in their definitions. Ivor Noel Hume (1969:12) defines historical archaeology as "the study of material remains from both the remote and recent past in relationship to documentary history and the stratigraphy of the ground in

which they are found.” Kathleen Deagan suggests, “the field includes the study of human behavior through material remains, for which written history in some way affects its interpretation” (Deagan 1982:153). James Deetz (1996:5) uses the definition: “the archaeology of the spread of European cultures throughout the world since the fifteenth century, and their impact on and interaction with the cultures of indigenous peoples”. All of these definitions either emphasize the importance of written documents or the role of Europeans. They are a logical reflection of the beginning days of this discipline.

The founders of the title “Historical Archaeology” were American archaeologists searching for a name for the work done on colonial sites. They were working at Jamestown, the 1604 French settlement on St. Croix Island in Maine (Harrington 9), and Fort Necessity National Battlefield in western Pennsylvania. They were investigating the sites that in one way or another revealed insights about the behavior of European populations.

Historical Archaeology has its roots in American archaeology and as such we can see how this influence spread throughout the historical archaeology practiced around the world. South African archaeologists such as Martin Hall and Ann Markell (1993:3) define historical archaeology as “the archaeology of European colonial expansion into southern Africa and the archaeology of the impact of this expansion on the communities long-established here.” The problem is that if historical archaeology is to be truly global in scope, it has to be broad in its definition. When it is broad, it can allow for alternative sources of historical evidence.

This is particularly relevant for historical archaeology in Africa. Creating a distinctly African tradition of historical archaeology entails using oral traditions as a valid

historical source. Kit W. Wesler (1998) uses a good definition for a historical archaeology that is pertinent for African studies and yet broad enough for a global scope:

Historical archaeology, most simply, is the archaeology of peoples who can also be investigated through historical documentation. It is an archaeology that may draw from two sources of data, archaeological and historical. The historical sources may be literate or oral; the defining factor is the existence of two practically independent data sets, which may be compared, contrasted, and utilized as sources of hypotheses drawn from one and testable against the other, thus allowing for better rounded views of societies under study and for more rigorous testing of generalizing formulations. Historical archaeology includes the archaeology of literate societies (and one of the failings of historical archaeology as practiced is the continued myopia that segregates Classical and non-Western archaeologies into their own separate disciplines, rather than seeking methodologies that comprehend historical societies as a single study), of societies observed by literate societies, and of societies that maintain a historical consciousness by other means, especially by oral tradition (3).

You can see the influence of the American tradition of historical archaeology within African archaeology, as you can see the directions moving in a more African tradition.

### **African Historical Archaeology**

Historical archaeology as practiced in South Africa differs both methodologically and theoretically from historical archaeology in other areas, particularly in regions of Africa. Many reasons account for this difference. Although Eurocentric ideals permeate throughout the early literature of historical archaeologists in Africa, among South Africanists this focus strongly resonates even in current discourse. The political history and ideology of scholars working in South Africa often dictates their topics of interests, theoretical positioning, and choice of methods.

While a large part of South African historical archaeology involves particularistic studies of Dutch settlements and European forts, archaeology of black South African populations has not been totally ignored. South African Late Iron Age studies on pre-colonial agriculturalists bear heavily on interpretations of the impact of the contact

period. These studies have had a role in undermining the political interests of apartheid supporters, and hence the false assumptions of the general public (Hall 1990b).

A comparison to East and West African historical archaeology highlights the divergent directions scholars have taken throughout the history of African historical archaeology. While South African historical archaeology remains a practice of white minorities, historical archaeology in East Africa moves towards creating a tradition of historical archaeology that is directly relevant to African interests (Posnansky 1966b, Schmidt 1978). In Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, the contributions of black African scholars and the concerted effort of non-black archaeologists to give credence to African voices forge innovative horizons for the future of African historical archaeology.

While the early debates in East Africa rested on a core of Eurocentric beliefs, the more recent trends focus on indigenous contributions. Early perspectives in historical archaeology looked to non-Africans and foreign influences as a source for urban development, monumental architecture, and the introduction of various types of material culture such as iron tools and pottery. These biases were directly confronted by black African scholars such as Abungu and Mutoro (1993) and others working on the contributions of indigenous people.

The most central debate amongst East African historical and Iron Age archaeologists questions who is responsible for the origins of urban centers (see Chittick 1974; Kirkman 1974; Horton 1987a, 1987b, 1984; Abungu and Mutoro 1993; Mutoro 1987, 1994; Schmidt 1975, 1988; Chami 1988; and Sinclair 1982). Do we attribute foreign influences or indigenous roles to urbanization? Early scholars such as Chittick (1975) and Kirkman (1974) argued that "civilization" was due to foreign influence from

the Persian Gulf and the Middle East, in particular the Semitic-speaking people who migrated to East Africa from South Arabia.

In the middle to late 1970s, Neville Chittick and Robert Rotberg (1975) argued that the Shirazi merchants from the Persian Gulf migrated south and subsequently were responsible for the creation of urban settlements. Around this time, Kirkman (1974) laid the foundations for an Oriental paradigm. A product of the times and their social environment, both archaeologists overlooked the interior and the possibility of indigenous contributions.

Initial reaction to the work of Chittick and Kirkman came primarily from linguists. Not until the eighties did archaeologists enter the debate. During this period, Mark Horton (1987a, 1987b, 1984) found evidence that supported an indigenous source for the origins of Swahili urban sites. Working in Lamu on Pate Island at Shanga, he focused on cattle and camel kraals. While excavating, he uncovered indigenous pottery that led him to define the Tana tradition. This significant archaeological discovery became the focal point of heated debate for East African archaeologists and continues today.

This pottery gave Chittick a basis for addressing indigenous roles through Islamic archaeology. The discovery of Tanaware symbolized a turning point within the history of East African archaeology. It challenged the conventional myth of foreign influence and allowed archaeologists to recognize an indigenous voice in the history of Africa. David W. Phillipson (1993) states:

Tana pottery has affinities inland, but it cannot yet be linked more precisely with any particular population or area. Its extensive coastal distribution does, however, demonstrate a degree of cultural unity along

the Indian Ocean seaboard which was independent of overseas traders and their activities (221-223).

Overall, archaeologists in East Africa incorporated written records, oral traditions, and archaeological data in their research, thus making great strides to understand the contributions of indigenous Africans. By looking at the roles of indigenous people in the creation of urban centers, these archaeologists were able to place indigenous roles in a social system that demonstrated links between Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya as well as within a global network.

As historical archaeologists in East Africa turn their attentions to the roles of indigenous people, historical archaeologists in West Africa consider the concerns of black Africans through their research of the African Diaspora and the effects of contact on African populations. Like the historical archaeologists working in East Africa, they recognize the importance of using oral sources as historical evidence. Kit Wesler (1998) points out that a number of archaeological projects are designed to confirm the oral traditions of abandoned settlements, migration routes, and culture history. What is particularly interesting is that while "There has been little use of the documents other than as sources of site names and dates" (Wesler 1998:18), "The use of oral sources, however, has proven much more attractive to archaeologists in West Africa" (Ibid, 19).

Posnansky and Van Dantzig (1976) used the oral traditions of local Africans as well as the Dutch archives to rediscover Fort Ruychaver, a Dutch outpost in Ghana. Located on the Ankobra River, this fort was the only trading post in the hinterland of the Gold Coast. It was occupied from 1655 until 1659 and provided a direct link to the gold trade in the interior.



Historical archaeologists working in West Africa are also interested in the origins of the slave trade (see Posnansky and DeCorse 1986; Singleton 1985). They are hopeful that studies of West African communities will provide a base for comparison with free black communities and with material culture of slave populations in the New World. One of the earlier projects in this vain, the excavations at a slave dungeon in the Ghanaian Cape Coast Castle, revealed the meager possessions of the slaves before they left the African coast (Simmonds 1973). From these studies, archaeologists learned about the conditions of treatment in holding cells.

Archaeologists have also located eighteenth and nineteenth century Danish plantations. Unlike plantations in the New World, these were established under the hope that West African crops could replace the slave trade. This meant that plantations would serve as a supplier to Danish tradeposts, thus undermining the value of slave labor for plantations in the Americas (Posnansky and DeCorse 1986).

### **South African Historical Archaeology**

Historical archaeologists working in South Africa (Schrire 1995, 1988, 1987; Winer and Deetz 1991; Hall 1991; Hall et al. 1993) should be commended for their attempts to understand the expansion of European people on a global scale and its effects on local indigenous people. While this research demonstrates the directions historical archaeology should follow, other work has focused strictly on the development of European colonial populations. Although research on how the poor farming classes of Europe adapted in a foreign land provides valuable insight and is important for historical archaeology, historical archaeology in Africa demands attention be paid to the indigenous population that has been historically ignored or often portrayed through an inaccurate

colonial lens. Like many historical archaeological projects in North America, projects in South African historical archaeology have placed emphasis on European issues and a white heritage.

Historical archaeology in South Africa perhaps saw its beginnings when A. J. Goodwin (1952) first claimed that 1652 marked the end of prehistory and the beginning of written history. His claim led to the dedication of the 1952 volume of the South African Archaeological Bulletin to "Jan van Riebeeck and the Hottentots 1652-1662". Subsequently, research on colonial sites was largely the domain of salvage archaeology. H. N. Vos (1981) conducted many salvage projects in Stellenbosch. In addition to his restoration work at Groot Constantia, he directed years of work on Dutch colonial life, research that led to the discovery that Chinese porcelain was used as a common everyday ware (Deacon 1984). As a result of his faunal analyses, Vos also made significant contributions that led to insights about the diet of Stellenbosch colonists. Based on his findings, he noted that these European settlers depended on domesticated animals in their diet.

The focus on colonial populations also appears in the work of archaeologists studying in the Cape Town region. In search for the location of Van Riebeck's seventeenth century fort, Gabbabah Abrahams (1984) directed excavations on the Grand Parade of Cape Town Castle. In the sixties, E. Voigt (1977) conducted excavations at the Woolworths Extension site and the Mobil House site, areas she interpreted as Cape Town's municipal dump. Attempting to understand status differentiation, Martin Hall et al. (1993) worked at Paradise, a post for the Dutch East India Company.

Although these examples emphasize colonial topics throughout the Western Cape, colonial archaeology was not restricted to this region. Archaeologists working in the Eastern Cape also made significant contributions to our understanding of colonial lifeways. Janette Deacon (1984) conducted excavations in Grahamstown near Fort Selwyn. Although Margot Winer and James Deetz (1991) attempted to look at indigenous roles in their work at Salem, they argued that in order to make a more informed analysis of European influences on indigenous people, archaeologists need to understand the colonial process and the Europeans involved in this process. Since their aims were to understand British expansion on a global scale, they focused on British material culture.

Through its focus on colonial populations, we can clearly see how the practice of South African historical archaeology is influenced by the ways in which Americans first defined historical archaeology. This research is important for understanding the changes within European populations. While these insights are important, it is also important to broaden our definition of historical archaeology and make it applicable to the particular countries we study. Considering the current political climate in South Africa today, historical archaeologists working in South Africa must prioritize the concerns and interests of the majority black population. Work in East and West Africa has demonstrated that historical archaeology is in an ideal place to do so.

While historical archaeology in South Africa has either focused on particularistic studies, salvage archaeology, or global networks among European people, historical archaeology in East and West Africa has attempted to place indigenous people within a global network. The research in East Africa incorporates written records, oral traditions,

and archaeological data in order to inform interpretations of urban Swahili sites, whereas the research in South Africa seldom involves oral traditions and often is conducted on sites predominately occupied or constructed by European people.

Overall, the colonial focus of South Africanists is illustrated throughout the history of South African archaeology and in numerous examples of archaeological practice today. These include: 1) the reluctance of archaeologists to work in certain areas of the former Transkei and Ciskei, 2) the lack of attention to oral traditions and how they inform archaeological problems, 3) the avoidance of issues that relate to indigenous interest, 4) the look at indigenous actors from the past in terms of how colonial peoples dominated their world (instead of as active autonomous agents), and 5) the focus on colonial sites. Explanations behind these theoretical and methodological themes surface when we examine the context of the political and social situation surrounding South African scholars.

Historical archaeologists in South Africa as well as other parts of the world have largely focused in the past on European issues. For scholars working in Africa, this limitation is changing with increased sensitivity to the history of Africans during the historical period. If scholars continue to ignore the role of African populations in African studies, they risk the future of historical archaeology.

### **Theoretical Position**

The theoretical position underlying my project consists of three arguments: 1) as anthropology, historical archaeology should produce explanations of culture and promote awareness and understanding of cultural differences and similarities, 2) ideology, cognitive factors, and material conditions together cause culture change, and 3) history is

important. History in itself is not the sole determinant of culture, however, it is necessary in order to build comprehensive explanations.

To understand the social, ideological, economic, and political conditions of a particular time period, it is necessary to understand the events that preceded that period within a diachronic framework, to understand the factors that brought people to that moment. In addition, history provides a place for indigenous voices. If archaeology is to strive as a discipline, it must be interesting to everyday people. The goals of historical archaeology should thus involve explaining culture as well as addressing the perspectives of people often not recognized in the written record and the concerns of everyday people. By blending epistemological perspectives and incorporating the rigorous methodological objectivity of science with a critical evaluation of the past, historical archaeologists can make significant contributions to anthropology overall.

### **History is Important**

Some archaeologists question the role of history within archaeological explanations. Lewis R. Binford (1972) states:

Specific "historical" explanations, if they can be demonstrated, simply explicate mechanisms of cultural process. They add nothing to the explanation of the processes of cultural change and evolution. If migrations can be shown to have taken place, then this explication presents an explanatory problem; what adaptive circumstances, evolutionary processes, induced the migration (Thompson, 1958, p. 1)? We must seek explanation in systemic terms for classes of historical events such as migrations, establishment of "contact" between areas previously isolated, etc. Only then will we make major contributions in the area previously isolated, etc. Only then will we make major contributions in the area of explanation and provide a basis for the further advancement of anthropological theory (22).

While his position seems in line with a strict materialist perspective, it also seems to work against comprehensive explanations. Once isolated variables account for the processual problem at hand, what accounts for the variables themselves? In order to understand the-

conditions that effect migration or whatever problem is at hand, you have to understand the conditions that led up to that situation.

It seems that Binford throws out the value of history altogether. George E. Marcus makes a valid point that a rejection of historical determinism as a primary explanatory mechanism must not be confused with a rejection of historical consciousness. It is easy to mistake the break from the trope of history in a realist anthropology as a break from history altogether. The problem with historical determinism is that it is built upon the reliability of memory. Marcus' critique is that while memory is a necessary component of self-recognition within the construction of identity, it is also filtered through personal representations. He sees memory as a linking medium that relates history to identity formation.

The relationship between memory, history, and identity formation, is precisely why history is so relevant for the future of archaeology. We are full circle to the point in which archaeology must be relevant to the concerns of everyday people, especially to those without a written past.

### **Trade, Interaction, and Changing Cultures and Economies**

A blending perspective structures the theoretical foundation of my research design. By investigating the ideological, symbolic, environmental, and material conditions as causal mechanisms of culture change, I was able to look at the Keiskamma River through a temporal lens, a regional perspective, and an area of intense interaction between two drastically different societies. The British and the Xhosa both had vastly different worldviews, material values, and traditional everyday practices. They both recorded history differently. Yet, they had similar economic strategies and stratified

societies. An analysis of these material conditions as seen through the events at the Fort Willshire trade fairs allows for explanations of the changing economies and ways in which people exploited advantages and opportunities in order to advance the status and success of their people. At the same time, an analysis of the symbolic, cognitive, and historical accounts of the events throughout the valley also account for behavior and the ways in which people interpreted and saw their environment.

This dissertation examines four questions related to the transformation of indigenous lifeways: 1) How elaborate were indigenous trade routes before and after British contact in the nineteenth century? 2) What types of locally manufactured goods were introduced into colonial society and what types of colonial goods were in turn incorporated into indigenous lifeways? 3) Were European goods used as a new currency that replaced traditional means of currency and if so what types were introduced into indigenous monetary systems? And 4) How did trade and colonialism restructure the everyday events in indigenous life including practices involving gender relations, religion, the manufacturing of indigenous goods, subsistence practices, education, and traditional ceremonies?

The key hypothesis of this study is that British colonialists as well as indigenous Xhosa contributed to the subjugation of indigenous lifeways and drastic changes within colonial society itself. Throughout this process and despite an incorporation of colonial practices, the Xhosa people managed to maintain their own indigenous identity. Cultural changes were visible in an archaeological context, reflecting in the material culture related to trade.

In order to gain an understanding of the cultural changes among Xhosa people in the Eastern Cape, I took a multi-disciplinary approach involving archaeology, oral traditions, and archival research. The archaeology of my project focused on: 1) locating and excavating the areas of Xhosa settlement outside Fort Willshire, 2) excavating the Fort Willshire trade fair area and a small control sample within the fort, and 3) comparing and contrasting the material patterns associated with both the Xhosa and the British (which are geographically divided by the Keiskamma River) in order to assess changes in the economy. The archival research and the collection of oral history involved investigating: 1) the historical content and symbolic meanings embedded in traditional tales about trade, 2) colonial versus indigenous policies on trade, and 3) the effects of trade on indigenous and colonial domestic life, political organizations, and religious systems. The following chapters describe my evidence and discuss their implications for an interpretation of Xhosa and British interaction in the early nineteenth century.



CHAPTER 3  
THE DAYS OF INDEPENDENCE TO THE DAYS AT HAND:  
A HISTORY OF THE KEISKAMMA RIVER VALLEY

In the preceding chapter, a presentation of my theoretical framework outlined the major questions and guiding principles I used to understand the effects of trade and economics on cultural change. This chapter elaborates on that foundation and offers an historical background to my study area. It recounts the history of the Keiskamma River Valley from the days of Xhosa independence, through the period of contact and trade with the British, and to the events following the closing of the Fort Willshire fairs. It describes the social and natural environment throughout the valley and documents specific events relating to life as a trader at Fort Willshire and as a Xhosa settler within the Keiskamma River Valley. Seen within a regional and global framework as well as through a chronological lens, the Fort Willshire fairs and the everyday events surrounding the people involved in the fairs reveal a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of trade on the Xhosa people.

Trade at Fort Willshire played a significant role in indigenous cultural change by drawing the Xhosa into a situation of dependence on colonial goods. This dependence started a chain of events that pulled the Xhosa into a colonial system, opened the borders of the Xhosa kingdom to colonial traders and settlers, and eventually left the Xhosa turning to the colony to sustain themselves. Since the Keiskamma River Valley was the southern most border of the Xhosa kingdom, it was the gateway between colonial powers

and an autonomous nation. Economic interaction in this valley held the key to an insurgence of colonial influence throughout the rest of the province.

Once the Fort Willshire trade fairs ended and trade could no longer be contained to the Keiskamma River Valley, the controlling Xhosa were pushed out in favor of more collaborative Xhosa chiefs. The most powerful Xhosa chiefdoms lost their stature to less prominent ones. In turn for protection, access to goods, and prime land, the collaborative chiefs allowed colonial interests to supercede those of the collective Xhosa kingdom. For the Xhosa who were previously deemed more prominent, this meant loss of more land, loss of control over resources, and relinquishment of political autonomy. Without control over their means of production, they found themselves relying on the colony to fulfill their basic needs, a dependence which eventually forced them to submit to being a source of cheap labor during the South African Mining Revolution.

This chapter presents the historical context behind the incorporation of the Xhosa into the colony and the role of trade in the loss of Xhosa independence. It focuses on the details surrounding the Fort Willshire trade fairs as well as the overall picture that places the fairs into a broader history of the region. By identifying the individuals involved in constructing the cultural landscape over time and outlining their roles in making history, this chapter highlights the importance of the fairs in changing political, social, and economic relations.

### **The Context of the Times: Pressures on the Xhosa Kingdom**

During the early nineteenth century, economic interaction between the Xhosa and British involved new trade relations and reorganized distribution patterns. Prior to this period, indigenous traders obtained goods from a variety of different sources and

redirected them to others for profit. The purpose of trade for the Xhosa was to increase wealth rather than to fulfill subsistence needs. The Xhosa had a cattle based economy and used trade goods as cattle equivalents or as a means for acquiring more cattle.

During the contact period while the structure of indigenous economy remained intact, the distribution of goods and the relationships between traders and suppliers went through dramatic changes.

J. B. Peires (1982) points out that despite contact with European traders during the early nineteenth century, no internal diversification occurred within the Xhosa economy. The basic unit of currency still relied on the value of cattle. It was the mode of exchange that changed due to increased European contact. Trade goods obtained from colonial sources replaced pre-colonial cattle equivalents. The British centralized trade by restricting trade to the frontier border, specifically to the Keiskamma River Valley. At Fort Willshire, they regulated trade and demanded that the trade of goods in high demand be accompanied with goods of less value.

These changes in trade relations were catalysts of further change for the Xhosa. Indigenous trade with Europeans ultimately led to a struggle for material resources and control over land rights. Since the primary subsistence strategy for the Xhosa as well as for white colonial settlers relied on cattle, both sides fought over large grazing areas. As a response to repeated cattle theft and violent wars, the colonial government established a ceded territory or "no-man's land" that reached the Keiskamma River. They demanded this area remain unsettled to act as a buffer between indigenous and colonial lands. Creating this neutral territory, colonial officials further encroached on indigenous land, pushing back the borders of the already diminishing Xhosa kingdom. As the Xhosa

fought this aggression, tension increased across the frontier. Although this ceded territory was a policy conceived to foster better social relations between the colony and the Xhosa, it nevertheless succeeded only in exacerbating the limited resources and political instability already building amongst different Xhosa chiefdoms.

Lack of alternative subsistence strategies and other work opportunities also increased the importance of livestock and competition for land. With political power, chiefs could gain military strength and economic wealth, which in turn increased their chances of maintaining cattle. Keeping politically stable however was not an easy task.

Many unforeseen problems made it difficult for the Xhosa and the colony to live off the land without confrontations. While the colony pushed further east taking more indigenous land, population pressures from neighboring communities reduced the availability of viable grazing land (Thompson and Wilson 1985, Crais 1992).

From the north, people fled as a result of the Great Mfecane, a period of extreme social turbulence (Hamilton 1995, Duminy and Guest 1989, Derricourt 1974, Moyer 1974). During this time, a powerful Zulu state emerged around the Mfolosi River region, and slave traders incited violence by raiding settlements and gathering slaves in the Delagoa Bay area. Colonists contributed to the tension by continually searching for cheap labor. All of these events affected the productivity of agriculture and the rearing of cattle. In response, Zulu people ran for refuge in Xhosaland.

In the west, the Boers began moving out of the Cape Colony. Wheat farming, wine production, and trade in the city itself could not provide for the needs of its expanding population. Cape Town and its surroundings could no longer support the settler community. As a response to this situation, Boers gradually moved east in search

of more farmland and eventually pushed into the Xhosa kingdom. Faced with the Boers pressing from the west, the Zulus coming in from the north, and the colony moving frontier borders from the south, the Xhosa kingdom lost land at the same time as their population rapidly grew in numbers.

In addition to these population pressures, natural disasters effected cattle. Droughts, famine, and cattle diseases devastated the Xhosa. All of these events and the fact that the need for land superseded the availability of land contributed to extreme stress levels and intense competition.

Fort Willshire represented the colonial government's attempt to control this situation. Built on the banks of the Keiskamma River in the ceded territory, the strategic placement of this fort was intended to enforce separation and control interaction between the Xhosa and the colony. To establish harmony on the frontier, the government placed official limits on contact. This meant regularizing trade. Fort Willshire became the site of the first permanent, official trade fairs in the Eastern Cape (see figure 3.1).

The colonial government restricted trade throughout the entire province to this one site. Trade at Fort Willshire was the only medium in which the Xhosa and the colony could officially meet on a level of mutual interaction. Through the trade fairs, masses of Xhosa interacted with colonial settlers on a regular and relatively peaceful basis.<sup>1</sup> While the violence characteristic of the Frontier Wars existed outside of the Fort Willshire trade fairs, at the fairs themselves intense competition was seen not through constant military clashes or cattle raids, but through economic strategies.

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<sup>1</sup> Crais (1992:108) claims that anywhere from a few hundred to more than a thousand participated in the fairs. Peires (1982:100-101) states that the fairs attracted two or three thousand at a time. See page 25.



Figure 3. 1 The Fort Willshire Trade Fairs

From *Steedman's Wanderings in South Africa*. Drawing from the University of Cape Town Africana Collection. Also in Cory (1913:178-179).

Using the trade fairs, the colonial traders exploited the resources of Xhosa lands without physically stealing them through theft or military dominance. They exhausted the supply of ivory and products from wild game. The Xhosa in turn recognized an opportunity to use the fairs to their advantage. Since the Great Chief Ngqika hosted the Fort Willshire Fairs in his territory, he and his people had the opportunities to exploit other indigenous traders and their economic transactions at the fairs. They increased their wealth through an imposed toll on foreign Xhosa traders and a tax system on all trade goods.

Collaborating with the colonial government by participating in the fairs, Ngqika himself collected gifts from the colony that insured his cooperation. With this economic advantage, he could demonstrate his wealth and affluence in order to strengthen his political position and the standing of his people within the Xhosa kingdom. Ngqika and his people took advantage of the material resources provided by colonial traders and the economic opportunities offered by the trade fairs, yet by doing so, they entered a global economy and became increasingly dependent on colonial goods. Despite this inevitable conclusion, Ngqika was drawn to the irresistible immediate benefits. As with the British, controlling the local environment and Xhosa movement across the landscape was a key factor in this process and Ngqika's ability to maintain a continuum of maximum economic and political gains.

### **The Environmental and Social Landscape**

The environment and social landscape of the Eastern Cape was a large part of the process of change for both the Xhosa and the British. Different individuals used the environment as a way to define space, place limits on behavior, and organize political and

ethnic alliances. Border disputes, competition for land, use of environmental resources, and settlement patterns had an impact on social, political, and economic relations.

In the Keiskamma River Valley, the environment and social landscape influenced the distribution of trade goods and the relationships between suppliers and traders for the entire Xhosa kingdom. At the Fort Willshire fairs, the environment and the composition of people dictated the management of trade relations at the fairs, the manipulation of prices, and the everyday activities of traders apart from daily trading. Within a multi-scalar perspective of economic relations surrounding the fort, this section shows how the environment affected the regional dynamics of trade as well as the daily transactions from individual to individual.

### **Borders of the Kingdom**

The boundaries of Xhosaland often fluctuated due to contact with other indigenous groups, political conflicts amongst the Xhosa themselves, and colonial interaction. Clifton C. Crais (1992:14) characterizes the Eastern Cape as a frontier area of "ethnic ambiguity and intensive social construction", an area in which new identities were formed as older ones continuously changed. In the Keiskamma River Valley, social and political changes on the landscape corresponded closely to changes throughout the Eastern Cape and reflected in relations at the trade fairs.

Frequently changing borders and movements of people from other borders of the Eastern Cape placed pressures on the Keiskamma border. In addition, the northern Drakensberg Mountains and the Indian Ocean to the southeast, contributed to the bottleneck effect that intensified population problems. Xhosa elders remember Khoisan people settling in the Ntlini yaseNgcabasa (see figure 1.2) and living side by side with



the Xhosa. Elders also recall Zulu migrants intermarrying with local Xhosa settlers in the valley. Oral traditions describe mixed marriages as a relatively frequent occurrence (see Chapter 4). Through marriage, the Xhosa often incorporated migrants or subjugated people into their chiefdoms. In the days of Xhosa independence, the land could support this growing population. By the nineteenth century however, land constraints and political turmoil strongly affected the social make-up of the Keiskamma River landscape.

Tension on the borders shaped interactions throughout the Xhosa kingdom. They affected the relationships between suppliers and traders, distribution patterns of trade goods, and the management of materials within the Xhosa kingdom. Before the advent of Fort Willshire, traders obtained goods from other indigenous groups on the borders of the kingdom. Fort Willshire attracted traders from long distances. The pressures along the borders and the growing tensions between indigenous groups contributed to the importance of Fort Willshire and the Keiskamma River Valley as a location of economic interaction.

During the nineteenth century, fluctuating borders involved political agendas and military conflicts. The Mfecane led to conflicts over borders and land rights amongst smaller neighboring chiefdoms to the north of Xhosaland. Zulus fleeing from Shaka moved into these areas and as far south as the Keiskamma River Valley. The colony caused a number of wars over the frontier borders, paving the way for Colonial farmers and traders to move further into Xhosaland and abscond more land. For the Keiskamma River Valley, the result was an ambiguous social landscape composed of transients as well as landholders who collected fees from traders.

## The Highlands

Despite these disputes, borders of the kingdom were generally defined by the Sundays River, the Mbashe River and the Indian Ocean (see figure 3.2). The landscape varied considerably from temperate grasslands to dense acacia forests; yet, it was comprised of four general belts. These included the northernmost area, the highlands, a flatter and more open belt, and the coastal lowlands (Peires 1982).

Most of the Xhosa lived in the highlands, which is where the British built Fort Willshire. Until it became overpopulated, this area readily supported the population of the Xhosa, and defined different chiefdoms of the kingdom. The highlands consisted of a series of small mountains such as the Winterberg and the Amatola Mountains, and a number of valleys, rivers, and streams. It had a good water supply, various forested areas, and mixed pasturage (including sweetveld and sourveld).<sup>2</sup> The rich and deep soils of the area provided the needed nutrients for fields of maize, pumpkins, melons, and sweetcane. The nutritive soils were most likely due to high levels of rainfall and major rivers such as the Fish River, the Kei River, the Buffalo River and the Keiskamma River (see figure 3.2).<sup>3</sup>

The rich vegetation and water supply supported a wide variety of wild animals.

In a letter from Mrs. John Ross to her brothers and sisters dated 1825, she describes the large assortment of animals in the area:

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<sup>2</sup> According to Cowling et al. (1997:594), sweetveld is defined as "... grassland on basic, enriched substrata, but with moderate to low rainfall and/or high radiation conditions (north-facing slopes)," and sourveld is defined as "rangeland (typically short grassland) on acidic substrata with low nutrient status and mesic conditions." Sourveld is found mostly at high elevations and offers palatable plants strictly in the growing seasons. Unlike sourveld, sweetveld remains edible and nutritious when mature.

<sup>3</sup> Rainfall averages from 800-1200 mm (Peires 1982). The makeup of the region's landscape depends on this rainfall and overall management of the vegetation. Rainfall in the area depends on elevation. The mean annual rainfall is 410-500 mm p.a. (La Cock 1992, Fabricius and Burger 1996). In addition, the amount of rainfall has cultural implications.

of wild beasts are here – there are the lion, leopard, elephant, sea-cow or hippopotamus, zebra, jackal wolf, monkey and wild cats – not the domestic cat turned wild. The lion, elephant and hippos are not near us. There is much game – various kinds of deer, hares, rabbits, conies, pheasants, partridges, wild ducks, 3 kinds of doves. There are some very beautiful fowls; 2 kinds of cranes; guinea-hens, parrots in abundance, eagles, vultures, hawks with a great variety of small birds and large crows with a white ring of feathers round the neck....I believe there are no ostriches in [the Xhosa kingdom] if they be they are far away from us, else the [Xhosa] would bring us both feathers and eggs (1825:27).

Wild game was plentiful throughout the Keiskamma River Valley, yet the archaeological evidence seems to suggest that colonial traders at Fort Willshire relied more on domestic animals rather than local game (see Chapter 6). The Xhosa however relied on domestic animals as well as wild game. For the Xhosa, wild game served as a source of trade products, food, or a symbol of a hunter's strength and power. Xhosa elders from different locations in the Keiskamma River Valley described influential men who killed lions and who built their reputations on stories of courage. Other elders described taboos, cautioning against the dangers of the Keiskamma. They warn people about the sea-cows, hippos, snakes and monsters that live in the river (see Chapter 4). Many of the stories about the past revolve around land and water, and guide the Xhosa and their understanding of their natural environment.

While the land and the water were equally important to the Xhosa, it was the water and not the land that determined patterns of Xhosa settlement (Peires 1982). The Xhosa often settled on the tops of ridges close to large supplies of wood. Their homesteads faced the sunrise and consisted of eight to fifteen beehive-shaped dwellings. The spatial distribution of these settlements formed the Central Cattle Pattern (Huffman 1982, 1986, Kuper 1982, Whitelaw 1993). Landscape and archaeological clues as discussed later in this dissertation seemed to indicate similar settlement patterns in the Keiskamma River Valley (see Chapter 6).

By the opening of the Fort Willshire fairs in 1824, Xhosa homesteads were pushed further east and the Keiskamma marked the southernmost boundary of the Xhosa kingdom. By 1820, Governor Somerset started appropriating approximately 4000 square miles from Ngqika and his people. Establishing the ceded territory, he took land between the Kat and the Keiskamma Rivers, yet allowed Ngqika's people to stay between the Tyhume and the Keiskamma. The British clearly used the rivers as boundaries to control Xhosa behavior, mark geographical differences between the two populations, and establish political alliances.

In contrast, the Xhosa often used environmental characteristics of the land to determine political strategies against the British. On the banks of the Keiskamma, traders visiting the Fort Willshire fairs described scenes filled with semi-succulent shrubs including various acacias, aloes, prickly pear, and euphorbia. The vegetation included dense shrub land of medium height and either grassland or dwarf shrubs (La Cock 1992).

Stupendous mountains, abrupt and frightful chasms, were among the nobler features of the landscape; whilst the various evergreens that clothed the steep declivities, -the darkening forests that adorned each towering eminence, - exhibited a mass of verdant foliage, most refreshing amidst the vast magnificence of the picture (Steedman 1835(1):4).

The Xhosa used the prickly vegetation, forested patches, and mountainous terrain to hide their cattle during the Frontier Wars and employ guerilla warfare techniques during military excursions. During the period of the trade fairs, the river valley landscape and the way in which the Xhosa situated themselves across it allowed the Xhosa to keep watch over the British. Fort Willshire was located at the bottom of the Keiskamma River valley in full sight of the Xhosa settlements across the river.

On approaching Fort Willshire in the dusk of evening my attention was attracted by numerous fires, which were dispersed in every quarter; and imparted an

exhilarating effect to the dreariness and solitude of the scenes around (Steedman 1835(1): 4).

The fires across the landscape belonged to Xhosa and colonial traders. Steedman (1835(1): 5) describes them “regaling themselves on the ground before the blazing fires...., and enjoying....the necessary refreshments of food and rest”. As the colonial traders sat near their wagons, the Xhosa assembled themselves on the opposite side of the Keiskamma River. This picture painted the scene that would mark economic transition and a major departure from their previous ways of life. For the Xhosa waiting to trade their goods the following day, the scene marked the beginning of the end of their days of independence.

### **The Xhosa Kingdom**

#### **Days of Independence**

In the 1800s, viable land was plentiful. The Xhosa prospered in a growing and politically strong nation. Their cattle economy was secure, and they had few problems sustaining their society. Individual families remained stable, and religious practices reflected traditional ideological beliefs. The structure of Xhosa society and settlement patterns was largely dependent on the rains, the layout of the land, and the patterns of water resources. Each chiefdom had its own river and each sub-chiefdom had its own tributary. Although the Xhosa routinely faced drought, famine, and diseases such as tapeworm and anthrax, they had the resources to successfully recover from such setbacks. Alberti (1968:70) notes that during this period of independence, Xhosa society was the embodiment of stability.

They lived off an abundance of land that was a needed resource to raise cattle. They cultivated maize, sorghum, tobacco, and pumpkins; however, the clay soils were more suited for stock farming than intensive agriculture. The political, social, and economic structure of Xhosa society depended heavily on the possession of cattle. Cattle represented power, the value of labor, and bride price to begin new families. Cattle also segmented society by defining the wealth and status of individuals.

[Politically] Segmentation provided the crucial social mechanism for expansion in a genealogically related chiefdom like the Xhosa, but it never threatened the essential unity of the Xhosa people before the colonial era (Switzer 1993:35).

The days of independence were relatively peaceful, affluent, and stable (Alberti 1968, Crais 1992, Elphick and Giliomee 1979, Hammond-Tooke 1957, Peires 1982, Soga 1932, Stapleton 1994, Switzer 1993, Thompson 1990).

By the first half of the nineteenth century, however, this situation took a drastic change as the Xhosa fought bitterly to save their independence. The early nineteenth century saw major changes and by the mid-nineteenth century, relatively peaceful and self-confident days were over. Although the Xhosa fought violently and fervently against colonial policies, they nevertheless found themselves without many options to preserve the independence of their people.

### **Threats to Independence**

By the late eighteenth century, the prosperity of the Xhosa began to change. An expansion of Afrikaner trekboers from the Cape marked their downfall. The consequences of this contact coupled with new divisions within the Xhosa political structure formed a catalyst for what Thompson (1990:73) calls the "eventual conquest" of all Xhosa. In approximately 1750, the Xhosa kingdom split into two factions, one of

which split again in 1782, thus forming three major divisions. These groups included the Gcaleka in the east of the Kei River, the Ndlambe found in the Zuurveld, and the Ngqika living between the Kei River and the Fish River (Thompson 1990:73). Colonial officials pitted Xhosa divisions against each other. They ignored traditional power structures and formed selective alliances. They also made treaties that disregarded certain chiefs yet applied to the entire Xhosa nation. By creating more and exacerbating the already established rivalries between Xhosa chiefs, colonial officials weakened the collective defense of the Xhosa against European aggression. Relations with the Ngqika Xhosa and the Gqunukhwebe in particular demonstrate how the colony used alliances to achieve their goals.

### **The Ngqika Xhosa and the Gqunukhwebe**

West of the Kei, the Ngqika people gained political strength against other Xhosa chiefs by forming coalitions with the British. They fostered these collaborative interactions by developing economic relations. As long as Ngqika maintained control over frontier trade, he held political leverage. Towards the end of the Fort Willshire fairs, he gradually fell out of favor. Eventually the British abandoned the fort, Ngqika's people moved out of the Keiskamma River Valley, and in their place, the Gqunukhwebe Xhosa established their chiefdom. The nineteenth and twentieth century history of the Keiskamma River Valley is a story surrounding these two peoples and their relations with the colonial government.

When Ndlambe, Ngqika's uncle, secured the support of the king and ruled as Ngqika's regent, Ngqika came to power (Peires 1982:50). Being the son of Mlawu, Ngqika was also the grandson of the Great Chief Rharhabe. Under Phalo, the said son of

Tshiwo, the kingdom divided into the Great House and the Right-Hand House in the second half of the eighteenth century. Phalo had two sons, Gcaleka and Rharhabe. As head of the Great House, Gcaleka ruled the Transkei, or northeastern section of the Xhosa kingdom, while as head of the Right-Hand House, Rharhabe ruled the Ciskei, or southwestern part of the kingdom. Different accounts explain how this divided kingdom came to be.

One day, two bridal parties confronted Phalo. The Mpondo King and his daughter arrived at Phalo's Great Place at the same time as the Thembu King and his daughter. To avoid offending either father, Phalo consulted an elder named Majeke. This old man said,

"What is greater than the head of the chief? And what is stronger than his right hand? Let the one girl be the head wife, and the other the wife of the right hand.' Thus, according to tradition, was the division between Great House and Right-Hand House created" (Peires 1982:46).

Crais (1992:27) however attributes the division within the Xhosa kingdom to the tensions between Gcaleka and Rharhabe. When Gcaleka tried to centralize the power of the kingdom by condemning suspected witches to death and using his position as a diviner to influence the Xhosa people, he created intense friction. Eventually, war broke out. Although Rharhabe lost, the kingdom remained fragmented. By the end of the eighteenth century, Gcaleka controlled the Transkei and Rharhabe controlled the Ciskei (see figure 3.3).

When Rharhabe and his Great son, Mlawu died in a war with the Thembu, Ndlambe took over by obtaining the support of King Khawuta. Ndlambe ruled for his nephew Ngqika until 1795. In that year, Ngqika put an end to his uncle's power and asserted his position as king of all the Xhosa (Peires 1982:51). The Keiskamma River



Valley and the surrounding lands became Ngqika Territory. When the Fort Willshire trade fairs were established, they fell under Ngqika's domain.

Although Ngqika maintained his power throughout most of these fairs, he often lacked the respect of his people. Many disapproved of his notorious avarice of property and his attitude towards the wives of his subjects (Elphick and Giliomee 1988:482). Some believed that he sold part of his lands to remain in the good graces of the colony and possibly to support his alcohol addiction (Peires 1982). Although Ngqika denied accusations, he nevertheless tried to use his relationship with the colony as the crutch of his political power. Prior to his downfall, he provoked the colony to take action against his enemies by accusing chiefs such as Hintsa, Ndlambe, Nqeno, and his son Maqoma of violating the interests of the colony. He also attempted to use the power of the colony to backup his imposing authority over the Gqunukhwebe.

His alliance with the colony placed him in a precarious position that he himself recognized even before the fairs opened. After the Fifth Frontier War, 1818-1819, in which Lord Charles Somerset punished the anti-Ngqika coalition headed by King Hintsa, Somerset turned to Ngqika and demanded compensation for military support. He wanted the lands between the Fish and the Keiskamma River.

The horrified Ngqika protested that although indebted to the English for his existence as a chief, "When I look at the large extent of fine country taken from me, I am compelled to say that, though protected, I am rather oppressed by my benefactors" (Elphick and Giliomee 1988: 482-483).

This set the stage for Ngqika's relationships with the colony and his neighboring Xhosa chiefdoms. Although Ngqika benefited greatly from his alliance with the colony, he paid a heavy price. Many Xhosa chiefs worked to evade Ngqika's power.

During the height of the fairs, as Ngqika tried to expand his authority with the support of the colony, Chief Mdushane worked to undermine it. The son of Ndlambe and the leader of the amaRharhabe, Mdushane fought Ngqika and colonial interests by establishing illegal trade relations. By violating colonial terms of trade and interaction, Mdushane circumvented Ngqika's control over the Fort Willshire trade fairs. He was also able to protect the Gqunukhwebe from Ngqika's aggression.

Despite Ngqika's tenuous friendship with the colony, consequential benefits for his people ended. As his people lost confidence in him, he spent most of his money on brandy. According to Peires (1982: 82), Ngqika "purchased it, danced for it, sold his wives for it, begged for it, and ultimately died of it". In 1829, the Great Chief died from tuberculosis and alcoholism. "Ngqika died in a welter of blood and witchcraft accusations" (Peires 1982: 82).

Shortly after the chief's death, Fort Willshire closed and the struggle for succession fell upon his sons Tyhali, Maqoma, and Sandile. Maqoma used the bricks of the fort to build his Great Kraal beyond Ngqika's territory (see Chapter 5 for a discussion of the search for Maqoma's kraal). Unlike Ngqika, his sons led the amaNgqika (or Ngqika Chiefdom) in the fight against colonial advances. Failing to foster colonial interests, they were pushed further north away from the frontier border (see page 74). Meanwhile in the Keiskamma River Valley, the Gqunukhwebe moved into Ngqika's old territory (see Chapter 4 for history of the origins of the Gqunukhwebe).

The Gqunukhwebe chiefdom came into being during the reign of King Tshiwo (c. 1670-1702), when the king granted his counselor Khwane the land and power to rule his own people. Khwane ruled this new chiefdom until his death. Shortly after, his son

Tshaka took over and moved the Gqunukhwebe further west. They paid tribute to Toena, the leader of the Khoikhoi chiefdom of the Hoengeiqua, to settle near the Zuurveld on the Bank of the Great Fish River (Crais 1992). By 1780, Tshaka and his son Chungwa firmly established the Gqunukhwebe chiefdom between the Fish River and the Sundays River (Elphick and Giliomee 1988, Peires 1982).

Settled in a highly disputed area, they struggled against others to legitimize their claim to the land. The colony maintained that in 1778 Governor van Plettenberg made an agreement with the Gwali chiefs to establish the upper reaches of the Great Fish River and the Boesmans River mountains as the boundary of the colony. The Hoengeiqua grandchildren of Ruyter also laid claim to the land. Although the Gqunukhwebe argued that their chief Tshaka had purchased the land between the Fish and the Kowie Rivers from Ruyter, Ruyter's grandchildren refused to acknowledge this agreement. In October 1799, Chungwa made a peace agreement with Acting Governor Dundas, a decision that allowed his chiefdom to remain between the Bushmans and the Sundays Rivers (Peires 1982:57). Since the Council of Policy had already changed the official boundary of the colony to the Fish River in 1780, the settlement of the Gqunukhwebe was conditioned on their ability to keep the peace with their colonial neighbors (Elphick and Giliomee 1988).

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the frontier was a continuously changing and highly contested landscape. According to Elphick and Giliomee (1988), Europeans, Khoikhoi and various Xhosa chiefdoms established mixed settlements in the frontier area. Although tensions continued between the different populations, integration increased as colonial trade penetrated the interior, borders

changed, and colonial settlers moved further into Xhosa territory. An increased colonial presence shaped the directions of change for the Xhosa people.

### **A Colonial Presence**

#### **The 1820 British Settlers**

In 1820, the British sent 4000 settlers to the Eastern Cape to act as a buffer between the rest of the colony and the Xhosa kingdom. With promises of the most beautiful and fertile part of the colony, these families sought relief from the crowded conditions of their British homeland. By 1823, these hopes gave way to the harsh conditions of their new environment.

A series of natural disasters undermined the success of their crops. They suffered through a long drought that preceded a major flood. Rust covered their crops, and the acidity in the soil made it difficult for agriculture to turn a profit. In addition, most of the settlers lacked agricultural skills and found that the one hundred acres allotted to each family was not enough to graze livestock. Exasperating their situation, Xhosa cattle raids occurred on a regular basis.

By 1823, many settlers abandoned their plots. Some resettled in Grahamstown or more populated areas to make a living from their individual trades. Others began traveling to take advantage of the trade networks. While some of these people bought and sold their goods to the Boers, others crossed borders to trade with the Xhosa. Despite the 1822 proclamation that prohibited trade with the Xhosa, illicit trade flourished between traders. By 1824, colonial officials felt pushed to legalize trade with the Xhosa for the benefit of the entire community.

As early as June 1822, the Governor of the Cape Colony, Charles Somerset began considering the establishment of an annual trade fair (Beck 1987). He arranged for the Albany landdrost, Harry Rivers, to organize a market for trade between the colony and the Xhosa people. For a year, Harry Rivers never found an opportunity to carry out this plan. Instead, his attentions stayed occupied on the escalating problems of the frontier as demonstrated by continued cattle raids, the management of military and civilian personnel, and illegal trade. Although Somerset also remained concerned about the troubles of the frontier, he was still committed to the idea of controlling trade. With the construction of Fort Willshire, he finally saw the implementation of the first official fairs.

### **The History of Fort Willshire**

To confront growing problems on the frontier, Somerset met with Chief Ngqika. The chief agreed to cede to the Cape Colony an area of land between the Keiskamma, Tyumie, and the Great Fish Rivers. This strip became a buffer zone in which neither the Xhosa nor the colonists could establish homesteads. Nobody could legally occupy the region. Somerset decided to enforce this decision and prevent settlement of the area by building two permanent forts. In October 1819, Somerset announced his decision to place these forts in the ceded or neutral territory, near Ngqika's country.

He commissioned the Royal Engineers to build a fort and name it after Major William C. Holloway. They never built this first fort. Instead, the Royal African Corps and the Engineer Department began building a second fort. They named this fort after the officer commanding the 38<sup>th</sup> Regiment and the troops on the frontier, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Willshire. Under the supervision of Holloway and Willshire, the construction of Fort Willshire began in 1819.

On 3 December in that same year, Somerset took leave and went to England. In his absence, Major-General Sir Rufane Shawe Donkin became acting Governor. On leave himself from his post in India, Donkin went to Cape Town and was placed on the staff of the Cape garrison. In May 1820, he paid a visit to the Eastern Cape. This visit changed the history of Fort Willshire. Donkin was extremely unhappy with the decisions concerning the construction of the fort, so he immediately ceased all production and ordered the building of a new structure.

He made this order for a number of reasons. Since building was still in progress, there were no barracks for the troops. The detachments of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Foot, the Royal Africa Corps, and their families lacked proper shelter. The water supply was inadequate and the people suffered from increasingly poor health. On top of all this, the engineer told Donkin that the completion of the building would take another 12 to 18 months. Workers were starting to complain about the pay. They were working on a permanent fortification without the "working money", a requirement in accordance with the "King's Regulations".

In addition, Donkin saw thirty wagons and teams of oxen at Fort Willshire. He discovered that they were "pressed" into military service, or on loan from local farmers. To continue using these animals and wagons would mean keeping these resources away from their owners for at least 12 to 18 months. Donkin felt this option would injure the productivity of farmers and be a major hindrance for agriculture in the colony.

For all these reasons, he ordered the construction of the Keiskamma Barracks or the Fort Willshire Barracks on 29 May 1820. He directed Lieutenant Rutherford, R. E. to build the barracks near the water, on the banks of the Keiskamma River, and one mile

away from the site of the first fort. They constructed the new building to house 250 men immediately, include stabling, and provide a hospital. The barracks were described as:

providing six rooms for sergeants and separate rooms for the Sgt. Major and Q.M.S. Eleven rooms each intended to hold 25 men, a guard room, bakehouse, a hospital room with accommodation for the surgeon, an orderly room and rooms for the commissariat storekeeper (Everson 1990:31).

Since the original Fort Willshire was never completed, the Keiskamma Barracks became known as Fort Willshire. Donkin estimated that workers would complete construction within 4 to 6 months.

When Lord Charles Somerset returned to the Cape towards the end of 1821, he found the barracks completed and already occupied by the company. He was furious. He disapproved of the decisions Donkin made during his absence.

Donkin's substitution of the Keiskama Barracks for Fort Willshire was one of the points which led to interminable correspondence and to extreme bitterness between the two men (Long 1947:2).

Despite his disapproval of the barracks, he decided to hold the first permanent and official trade fairs at Fort Willshire. On 23 July 1824, Somerset published a Proclamation announcing that an annual fair would be held in order to supply the Xhosa with:

such articles as might tend to civilize them, and to promote industry amongst them, under the Regulations therein laid down; and whereas it has appeared to me expedient, in order to prevent illicit traffic from being carried on with them, and to ensure a fair and equitable barter between the Colonists and the [Xhosa], that Regulations should be framed more suitable to the present circumstances of the Border District, -I, therefore, hereby order and direct, that henceforward no traffic whatever shall be carried on with the [Xhosa] directly or indirectly, except at Willshire Barracks, and under the following Regulations and Restrictions, ....(Somerset in Long 1947:3).

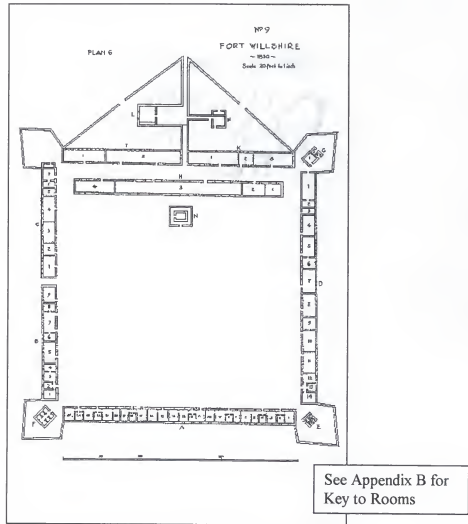


Figure 3.2 Plan of Keiskamma Barracks - Later referred to as Fort Willshire.

Sources: WO44/2 Holloway's Report of 31.3.1828, W.O. 55/2588 Ordnance, Miscellaneous (P.R.G.) Book 483, 1830 (P.R.O.) 1 U.P. Colonies. Africa. 20, p. 114.  
Also in Coetzee (1995:135) *Forts of the Eastern Cape*.



### **Fairs of Exchange and Contact**

Colonial officials held the first fair on 18 August 1824 and scheduled regular fairs on every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in each week of the year (Beck 1987:146). From 1 April to 30 September, the fair was open for business from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and from 1 October to 31 March, it was open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. When the fairs first opened, both Xhosa and colonial traders would usually arrive in the area on a Tuesday night. Since most of the English traders came from Grahamstown, they had to travel in wagons and on horses forty-five miles to Fort Willshire. Once they were there, they would wait in anticipation for the signal the following morning (Beck 1987:149).

Some say that the sound of a gun marked the start of bartering (Everson 1990). On 3 December 1828 while visiting Fort Willshire to preach to his congregation, John Ayliff wrote in his journal that officials hoisted a flag to signal the commencement of the fairs. At about 10 a.m., he wrote, a Union Jack rose from one of the bastions of the barrack square and soon after the market place was crowded (Ayliff 1828 in Hinchliff 1971:81). While the British permitted Chief Ngqika to enter the fort early with his wives and warriors, the rest of the Xhosa traders were restricted to their side of the river until they heard or saw one of these signals.

Once the signal was made, Xhosa traders crossed the river. Throughout the fairs, Kay (1833) estimates that about 200 Xhosa carried their goods over the Keiskamma. Others document approximately 500 people with various articles of produce (Randles 1976, Ayliff 1828 in Hinchliff 1971). Derricourt (1974:40) claims that by 1830, 1200 to 1500 Xhosa came to Fort Willshire to trade each week. Peires (1982:100) claims that the fairs attracted 2000 to 3000 at a time, and Beck (1987:152) estimates 150 to 3000 Xhosa

traders. They came from all over the Xhosa kingdom, from as far as the eastern side of the Kei and Thembuland (Peires 1982:100).

None of these Xhosa came empty-handed. They came with baskets filled with milk, large sacks of corn, or bundles of Indian corn plucked directly from the stalk (Kay 1833). Women crossed the river with pumpkins on their heads. Lieutenant J.W.D. Moodie (1835) describes the scene:

as soon as it was daylight we saw great numbers of these people collecting in swarthy groups before the fort, carrying dried bullocks' hides, elephants' tusks, "assagays," or light javelins, baskets, mats (236).

Trading proceeded under the direction of Major Henry Somerset and two other colonial officials (Randles 1976). According to Sir Andrew Smith, trading took place on the nearly level piece of ground just outside of the barrack gate in an area free of bush (see figure 3.1). With their goods, Xhosa traders sat in two lines about 100 yards apart (Ayliff 1828 in Hinchliff 1971:81). The sergeant in charge was responsible for allocating space to the traders. At noon, a bugle call indicated the commencement of trade on the first line. Trading continued until the sound of a second bugle call, and trade on the second line began with the sound of a third call. According to Ayliff (1928 in Hinchliff 1971:81), the first round of trading focused on the trade of small things such as horns and the second round of trading centered around the hide market. When the lowering of the Union Jack marked the end of the business day (Ayliff 1928), Xhosa traders crossed the river and returned to their camps on the East bank (Everson 1990:31).

Despite the prohibitions on valued goods such as cattle, arms, ammunition, and alcohol, the Xhosa acquired other highly prized items. The goods in most demand were beads and buttons.

The tribes-people preferred beads to clothing because beads served as an article of currency for trading for cattle with inland tribes, to which clothing was of no value, and beads could also serve as payment for lobola (Smith in Randles 1976:3).

The Xhosa also sought earrings, buckles, and trinkets for personal adornment (Everson 1990:31).

Although colonial traders came from a wide range of professions such as a farmer, butcher, and plumber (see Appendix A for list of licensed colonial traders, their home town, their ages, and their occupations), they supplied the fairs with both goods in high and low demand. They brought blankets, clothing, tools, and fishing hooks. They traded pins, tinder boxes, cooking utensils, salt, tea, coffee, and sugar (Everson 1990:31). They exchanged fabrics, leather trousers, agricultural implements, red clay, pots, kettles, knives, and brass wire (Randles 1976:4).

In turn, the Xhosa traded hides, skins, *sjamboks*,<sup>4</sup> ivory, corn, live animals, and birds. They also brought the gum from mimosa trees, even though English traders found it often too contaminated for the market (Randles 1976:6). Ivory was the most sought after item. Randles (1976) believes that the number of elephants killed must have been "appalling". He estimates that about 1681 tusks (at an average of 30 lbs a tusk) or 840 elephants were sacrificed for the ivory trade (Randles 1976:4/6). Cory (1913:12) wrote that

From August 18<sup>th</sup>, 1824, to January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1825, 38,424 lb. of ivory were obtained in barter, and from January 12<sup>th</sup>, 1825, to March 12<sup>th</sup>, 1825, 12,017 – or in about seven months, 50,441 lb. (about 20 ½ Cape tons). Besides this about 16,800 pounds of gum and 15,000 hides were also obtained. The average price given for ivory (in beads, etc.) was Rds. 2 (i.e. 3s), for hides Rds. 4 (6s), and for gum 1 skilling (4 ½ d.) per pound.

<sup>4</sup> A *sjambok* is a whip. Although Randles (1976) claims they were trading rhino hide *sjamboks*, Crais (1992:30) claims that they were typically made from the hide of a hippopotamus. According to Crais, they were often used to discipline recalcitrant black workers.

According to Peires (1982:100), during the first 7 months the fairs drew in 50,441 pounds of ivory, 16,800 pounds of gum, about 15,000 hides, and 137 trading licenses.

Many regulations dictated the events at the fairs themselves. Each trader was required to obtain a license from the Landdrost of his district (Long 1947:4, Beck 1987). Before trading at the fairs, people had to show their licenses and provide lists of barter goods to the commanding officer. Licenses were not transferable. The local magistrate registered each license and transmitted monthly returns to the Colonial office. Without a license, a trader faced a fine of 100 to 500 Rixdollars or imprisonment for 1 to 6 months. There was also a high penalty for selling firearms, ammunition, spirits or liquors. Violators of regulations could lose their licenses or trade goods, and face imprisonment or steep fines (Long 1947:4).

At Fort Willshire the 'Snatchaway System', in which white traders forced Xhosa into exchanging their goods at disadvantageous terms, had become 'too much the custom with some of the Traders'. The practice resulted in the stagnation and ultimately in the collapse of the trading fair, though as long as Xhosa could control the supply of beads the fair still held out some advantages. By the end of 1826, however, a number of entrepreneurs involved in mercantile and other pursuits noted 'the almost entire cessation of the Kaffer Fair' at Fort Willshire. The settler elite called for the end of the trading fairs and the opening up of Xhosaland and beyond to European traders. In 1830, after repeated requests by colonists, the government conceded and discontinued the fair at Fort Willshire (Crais 1992:111-112).

As the bead market grew and British officials lost control of economic interactions, occupants abandoned Fort Willshire.



Figure 3.3 Sketch of the Fort Willshire Ruins 1846

Source: Lt. William FD Jervois, Royal Engineers. Also, in *Sketches Illustrative of Late Events in the Southern African Interior*.

During the beginning of the Sixth Frontier War or "Hintsa's War", the British temporarily abandoned Fort Willshire only to reoccupy the fort in 1836 (Randles 1976). They used the site to hold a Court of Inquiry into Chief Hintsa's death. Hintsa, Paramount Chief of the Gcaleka Xhosa, died on the banks of the Nqbara River on 12 May 1835 (Long 1947:7).

By the end of 1836, certain political decisions had changed the social context of the frontier. The Colonial Secretary, Lord Glenelg, ordered everyone to abandon the Province of Queen Adelaide, including its capital King William's Town. That decision and the fact that the Fish River and not the Keiskamma was again the proclaimed frontier border prompted Sir Benjamin D'Urban to permanently abandon Fort Willshire.

Chief Maqoma took over the abandoned structure and sold it for two cows. According to General J.J. Bissett, the trader who dealt with Maqoma made a fortune by selling these materials for the construction of the town Fort Beaufort (Long 1947, Metrowich 1968, Randles 1976). A fort that had originally cost the colony 45,000 lbs, Fort Willshire soon became ruins (see figure 3.5 and 5.1).

### **Life after Closing: A Redefined Landscape**

The 1830s were a turning point in the history of trade on the Eastern Cape frontier. The closing of the Fort Willshire trade fairs during this period corresponded with the expansion of trade into the interior of Xhosaland and signaled a new way of life for the Xhosa.

As long as the Xhosa confined themselves to beads and buttons, they could at least maintain their independence. One could not buy European goods with beads and buttons. But the collapse of the bead currency in 1929 finally set the seal on their economic subordination (Peires 1982:107).

When the government opened the borders for trade, colonial entrepreneurs flooded the interior of Xhosaland with beads, thus inadvertently destroying the value of beads as a currency. They took over indigenous trade networks, monopolized trade relations by squeezing out other indigenous traders, and they made it difficult for chiefs to control commoners and their exchanges with Europeans. Trade chipped away at the economic basis that fueled chiefly power.

Although Crais (1992:112) claims that the penetration of colonial traders into the interior also destroyed the growth of market-oriented agricultural production, Peires (1982: 103) seems to argue just the opposite. Peires notes that after 1835 there was an expansion of agricultural production. As Americans responded to the market of mimosa gum, the colony discovered for the first time the values of maize and sorghum. Dacha or

marijuana crops flourished, the demand for corn increased, and to feed their horses, colonial traders increased their stores of Xhosa barley and oat hay. In Sarhili's country, colonial ships also stopped at Mazeppa Bay to exploit Xhosa supplies.

Xhosa were spending the proceeds on consumption goods – blankets, cotton rugs, soldiers' greatcoats, hats, handkerchiefs and so on. And they were sometimes selling rather more grain than they could really spare over winter. Nevertheless it is in this period that we see the genesis of that class of peasant producer which was to become so important later in the century (Peires 1982:103).

Trade marked the emergence of peasant producers, and the establishment of a class of wage laborers. As population pressures increased and indigenous trade networks blended with colonial trade networks, people began to turn to the colony for other types of work.

When the Fish River replaced the Keiskamma River as the southern most boundary, colonial officials decided to leave Fort Willshire altogether. While the exact date is obscure (Long 1947:8-9), shortly after abandonment and a period of expansion for colonial trade, the 1834-1835 Frontier War broke out. This war marked a widespread killing of colonial traders and saw an overall decline in frontier trade (Peires 1982: 103).

To address heightened tension between the colonists and the Xhosa, the colony placed more responsibility on frontier chiefs to maintain order and return stolen stock. They drew up treaties and made unrealistic demands. Settlers only intensified the situation, by holding chiefs responsible for their losses. They coveted Xhosa lands and insisted on military action to drive the Xhosa further beyond the frontier. Xhosa Chiefs had to sacrifice their creditability with their own people to meet the growing expectations of the colony.

During this period, the Xhosa lost significant amounts of land. They lost their rights to the Zuurveld and the Kat River Valley. The Zuurveld, known by the Europeans as the "land of sour grasses", was the semi-arid Karoo region located between the Great Fish River and the Sundays River.<sup>5</sup> In the Kat River Valley, prime land was given to emancipated Khoikhoi following the expulsion of Chief Maqoma, Ngqika's son.<sup>6</sup> For a brief period between 1835 and 1836, colonists pushed the Xhosa off their lands and proceeded to control the settlement of western Xhosaland. Increasing destitution forced more people to turn towards the colony. Peires (1982:105) claims that at some point in the 1830s Xhosaland could no longer support its entire population. The 1842 drought compounded their poverty. Pushed to find work in the colony, Xhosa commoners became an emerging working class.

### **And Ngqika's People? What happened to them?**

For Ngqika's people, heightened violence marked more major changes. The "War of the Axe" symbolized increasing loss of land and the disruption of their settlements. On March 1846, a Xhosa man was accused of stealing an axe and killing his guard on Cape Colony soil. Xhosa chiefs refused to turn over the prisoner and instead attacked the colony with full military force. At first, it looked as if the Xhosa would achieve success, but by late 1847, the Xhosa were ready to surrender.

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<sup>5</sup> The soils of the Zuurveld contain high levels of acidity and support vegetation that can be harmful to cattle that graze in the autumn and winter. In contrast, the river valleys that border the Zuurveld offer good pasturage all year long. Consisting of sweetveld and dense thorny shrub thickets, areas close to rivers supported the thriving cattle herds of the Xhosa people.

<sup>6</sup> There were three criteria used to determine the settlers in the Kat River Valley, an area intended strictly for settlement. Although the colony gave priority to upstanding Khoikhoi, many "Gona Hottentots" who previously settled amongst the Xhosa migrated into the area. Also, land went to those who supported the colony as part of the Cape Regiment fighting against the Xhosa. The final criteria was reserved for blacks who had property and knowledge of peasant production. Individuals from mission stations tended to fit all three criteria.



Governor Sir Harry Smith took the responsibility for the post-war settlements. He took over the "ceded territory" to make a new district called Victoria East of the Cape, and he permitted loyal Mfengu and colonial farmers to move in and divide the territory. He also seized the lands between the Keiskamma River and the Kei River to form the new colony of British Kaffraria. To keep chiefs in line, he allowed them to remain in certain areas provided they submit to the authority of British magistrates and agree to become British subjects. Placing further controls on the area, he gave a limited amount of land around forts and mission stations to white settlers. The reorganized social landscape forced more Xhosa individuals into dependence on the colony.

Frustration due to this growing reliance on colonial resources led Xhosa leaders to make one last attempt to holdfast to their autonomy. The period between 1851 and 1853 saw the most devastating war between the Xhosa and the colony. In 1851, Governor Smith drove close to 60,000 cattle from Gcalekaland. In response, the Xhosa tried to recuperate their losses. Although the Xhosa responded with intense armed conflict, they could not compete with the guns of the colonial military. The colony outgunned them and despite receiving word that some Xhosa were willing to admit defeat, Governor Smith continued military aggression. Already by 1852, Cathcart claimed in a dispatch to the Right Honorable Sir John S. Pakington, Bart. that under Chief Sandili, the Ngqika Xhosa:

has been almost entirely expelled from the Amatolas, of which we are now, to a great extent, in permanent occupation, and hope to be able to prevent their ever regaining possession, so as to profit by its pastures and resources (1852 as found in Cathcart 1969:77).

The Ngika (Gaika) people received their final vestments of imperial rule during this frontier war (Peires 1982), and found themselves in a vulnerable situation. Cathcart wrote that they appeared:

generally disheartened, and are starving; they evade any hostilities unless forced in self-defence to resistance, but the difficulty of the country enables them to elude our attempts to bring them to action, and it is only by occupation and temporary destruction of their pasturage, and consequent starvation, that they can be compelled to retire. They have no herds of cattle in the Amatola district (1852 as found in Cathcart 1969:78).

During this turbulent period, the administration of Cathcart (1852-1854) and Sir George Grey (1854-1861) acquired the responsibility of managing the Cape. In 1852, Cathcart reported to Pakington that he intended to move the Gqunukhwebe into the lands previously occupied by "rebellious" Xhosa chiefdoms. At the time, Kama and his people occupied the land in North Victoria near Whittlesea. Cathcart planned to move them to the area that bordered the lands of Siwani at the Umdizini River. He claimed that this proposal would fill up the remaining portion of the country on the Xhosa side of the border with "faithful and friendly" Xhosa chiefdoms. Kama embraced Christianity, worked to defend the colonial northern districts, and regularly met the requests of the colony. For these reasons, Cathcart felt that Kama and his people would serve as good neighbors on the frontier border (Cathcart 1852 in Cathcart 1969:129-130).

To implement his plan, in March 1853, Cathcart pushed the Ngqika into the area north of the Keiskamma River between the Amatole Mountains and the Kei River. He designated 600 square miles between King Williamstown and the Amatole Mountains as the Crown or Royal Reserve. In dispossessing land from those who participated in the war, Cathcart took some of the customary homelands of Ngqika's sons, Sandile and Maqoma, and permitted white settlers and other chiefdoms to occupy these areas.

Colonial farms began to dot the landscape, while speculators quickly took advantage of open territory.

The chiefs who allied with the Europeans during the war resettled in a chain along the east bank of the Keiskamma River and formed a buffer between the Ngqika and the colony (Cathcart 1856, DuToit 1954, Le Cordeur 1981). Cathcart was very pleased with the conduct of the chiefs living in this area.

The conduct of the Chief Siwani and his tribe, who occupy the greater portion of a broad margin on the left bank of the Keiskamma, is most exemplary, and his fidelity throughout the whole contest gives full confidence not only in his good faith, but in his power to restrain his people from lawless intrusion into the colony.

In the remaining portion of the river valley from Siwani's land to the Royal Reserve, Kama and his people also served the purpose of the colony. On his own accord, Kama had migrated from Whittlesea to the land formerly occupied by the "marauding" Chiefs Stock and Tola. Since Cathcart deemed this area untenable by Europeans and it was currently in military occupation, he was pleased to learn that the loyal chief had settled into the area. With Kama on the frontier border, Cathcart felt that:

A chain of trustworthy and loyal chiefs will be placed in contact with the colony, in the room of the lawless and restless occupants who have hitherto tenanted the woods and kloofs of the Keiskamma (Cathcart 1856:213).

In terms of land, the Mfengu, people of Toyise, and Kama benefited most from the dispossession of Ngqika Xhosaland. In a letter to Lieutenant Governor Darling, Cathcart writes that he provided a house for Kama. As Cathcart stated, "for he is really, I believe, a Christian", he arranged for Kama to have a missionary institution, with a school of the Wesleyan Society in his new location. "I have promised to build him a

good stone house, as soon as he decides upon the site, which will depend upon the advice of his missionary, no doubt, as he likes to live near him" (Cathcart 1856:374).

Under Kama, the Gqunukhwebe settled securely into the Keiskamma River Valley. While Cathcart was pleased with the character of Kama and the rest of the loyal chiefs, he was aware that only the benefits given to these chiefs insured their further cooperation.

The T'Slambie tribes, now the only Kafir neighbours contiguous to the colony, are fully aware of the advantages they enjoy as the fruits of their fidelity to the British Government in the late contest, and are convinced that loyalty has proved better policy than rebellion.

Granting no better motive, self-interest would probably now afford sufficient security for their good conduct, and if they be firmly but fairly dealt with, there is no risk of contumacy on their part. Should, however, at any time, a spirit of insubordination be kindled amongst them, they also well know that "the tables have been turned;" they have no longer the Amatolas to go to as their rallying point, for that great natural citadel is now in entire possession of a British garrison, and commanding all British Kaffraria, stands in the midst of them, ready to crush insurrection in embryo (Cathcart 1856:213-214).

Cathcart felt that a wall of loyal chiefs would extinguish tensions between the colony and the Xhosa kingdom. He would be able to control the more tenacious Xhosa by transferring the burden of monitoring them to the border chiefdoms. If the loyal chiefs wanted continued benefits from the colony, they would have to facilitate colonial goals. Cathcart seemed to think that the key to controlling the Ngqika chiefdom in particular was to maintain the Amatolas as well as the Royal Reserve. He thought that by working with the loyal chiefs and placing stringent controls on the settlements of the Ngqika chiefdom, it would be easy to control dissent, peace would be restored to the area, and security would smooth the progress of colonization (Cathcart 1856:215).

To control the Ngqika Xhosa even further, Cathcart not only pushed them from their homes, he established the "Village System" and dictated how they would resettle in

the Royal Reserve. He demanded that all Xhosa live in villages under the authority of individual headmen. Every home was responsible for paying an annual quit-rent of 10 shillings, a livestock tax, and a hut tax. Only those that could afford these fees could stay in the village. Others could visit, but for no more than one week. Each village contained a maximum of twenty huts, and each hut supported no more than twenty heads of cattle. He allotted two acres of land per family, an amount that officials later increased to four acres.

With his policies, Cathcart quickly destroyed traditional settlement practices. During the days when the Xhosa were less dependent on the colony, they could spread over the landscape and live comfortably on much larger areas of land. Under Cathcart's policies, people were forced to build houses close together in tightly confined communities. Cathcart expected them to build in straight lines, a process that went against customary spatial organization and traditional uses of the environment.

All of these changes presented new difficulties in terms of living off the land. Near villages, rich soils were sparse and grazing pastures were far. To feed their cattle, they needed the nutritious areas found near rivers and streams. They needed land and space in order to alleviate the scarcity of resources, schedule cattle grazing according to seasonal rains, foster political and social relations, recuperate from warfare losses, and basically support a large Xhosa population.

Through control of the land and resettlement, Cathcart tried to create dense populations that were not self-sustaining. To survive, the Xhosa became dependent on the colony for work, and consequently saw the emergence of a firmly established African working class. Cathcart's policies subjugated the Xhosa and drew them into the colony.

By establishing such rigid controls, Cathcart hoped to set the stage for incorporation of all British Kaffraria into the colony, yet at the same time reduce the chances of another frontier war.

His unyielding treatment of the Ngqika Xhosa was an example to other Xhosa chiefs. His policies in regards to them were a central element of his plan to control the Xhosa kingdom.

I hope ere long to be able to report that the designation of Ama Gaika has ceased to be known in British Kaffraria, excepting as a memento of the severe but just retribution which has fallen upon a rebellious race, and as a warning to those who now live in prosperity and peace under British rule not to allow themselves on slight grounds to be led into unavailing rebellion, and thereby inevitably sacrifice the blessings which they enjoy. Unless breach of faith, injustice, or undue severity on the part of their rulers should render the alternative one of desperation, - a case which, under British rule, I trust can never occur, - or that the instigations and intrigues of mischievous or designing persons should be suffered to prevail, I see no reason to apprehend a possibility of the recurrence of another Kaffrarian frontier war or rebellion, which good government, supported by a moderate but sufficient military establishment, may not suffice to smother in its birth (Cathcart 1852 in Cathcart 1969:130-131).

The Great Cattle Killing movement of 1856, in which they slaughtered all of their cattle based on the words of a child prophet, symbolized the last desperate attempts of the Xhosa to hold onto the independence of their kingdom. The outcome involved their complete reliance on the colonial government, their subjugation as a cheap labor source for the mining revolution, and their loss of control over indigenous economies. The slaughtering of their cattle represented the collapse of their cattle based economy and the end of their economic autonomy. With the loss of land, cattle, and political and economic control, the Xhosa turned to a colonial economic system that was antithetical to their previous traditional ways of life. Indigenous subsistence strategies based on pastoralism, agriculture, and indigenous trade gave way to lifestyles built around the mines.

## The Great Cattle Killing Movement

The Great Xhosa Cattle Movement (1856-1857), sometimes referred to as the “National Suicide of the Xhosa”, was an ideologically and materially driven response of people facing virtually the end of their political and social autonomy. The prophet Nongqawuse, a young girl, predicted that the dead would rise again to help the Xhosa regain the status they once enjoyed during the early nineteenth century. She convinced her believers to kill their cattle and destroy their crops, so that the ancestors would be pleased enough to join them in their fight against the European enemies. Some refused to believe Nongqawuse, while others slaughtered their cattle and starved to death. Approximately 400,000 cattle were killed, crops were destroyed, and subsequently at least 40,000 Xhosa starved to death (Thompson 1990:79).

Many disillusioned Xhosa succumbed to the demands of the Colonists. They lost their land, cattle, spirit, and the last remnants of their community allegiance. Having no means to support themselves, they went hungry. The population within British Kaffraria went from 105,000 in January 1857 to 37,500 in December 1857 (Peires 1989:319).

Despite these numbers, Peires (1989) argues that:

the Cattle-Killing was a logical and rational response, perhaps even an inevitable response, by a nation driven to desperation by pressures that people today can barely imagine (x).

Up until the eve of the Cattle-Killing movement, divisions within Xhosa society were already in opposition. While some saw the benefits of a relationship with the colony, others saw their downfall. Chiefs who previously controlled the economy and social behavior of their followers tended to believe Nongqawuse. In believing her prophecy, they were defending the traditional order of Xhosa society. Some of the nonbelievers in contrast sought to benefit financially from a colonial presence. They had

an interest in seeing the power of chiefs come to an end. The divisions between believers and nonbelievers closely correlated with class differences.

After the closing of Fort Willshire and the penetration of the colonial economy into the interior of Xhosaland, the traditional class system of Xhosa society transformed into one made of opposing class differences. Wealthy councilors, who once increased and secured their wealth by forming close relationships with their chiefs, now bypassed their chiefs by taking advantage of the opportunities presented by the colony, specifically those offered through trade relations. Before a colonial presence, chiefs redistributed the wealth that they accumulated from tributes and judicial fines. They also had the power to take away the riches of the wealthy. Chiefs and affluent men solidified their relationships with the community by sharing resources. They offered meat and grain to their neighbors during ceremonies for the ancestors and marked special events.

A colonial presence in the interior of Xhosaland provided ways for councilors to circumvent chiefs. Colonial traders established the beginnings of open markets, while Xhosa traders took advantage of the demand for goods in bulk. They sold portions of meat and corn by the bucket. Chiefs could neither provide similar proceeds nor control the incoming colonial funds. This undermined the authority of the chiefs and their control over the economy, a situation that intensified up until the Cattle Killing Movement.

Many scholars (Peires 1989, 1982; Crais 1992; Elphick and Giliomee 1979; Stapleton 1994) argue convincingly that the decisions of the Xhosa were not responses of the "weak, backward", but rather rational responses to diminishing resources and lack of



alternative options. Crais (1992:1-2) eloquently explains the position of the Xhosa during this turbulent period in the early nineteenth century:

On the eastern frontier of colonial expansion the social and political system of the Xhosa posed a direct challenge to European hegemony. But intermittent exchanges of goods and labour gave way to the rise of commodity production and the emergence of a coercive labour system which spawned frontiers of violence and colonial conquest into vicious colonialism they did not do so passively. Instead they critically shaped the colonial order in South Africa, from outright armed struggle to the less visible contests over power and identity.

The Xhosa were active participants in the construction of an unequal and racially divided colonial society. Although an attempt to break away from European hegemony and holdfast to control over their own society, the Great Cattle Killing Movement spiraled the Xhosa into dire circumstances. By 1860, the Xhosa found the structure of their society dismantled, the spirit of their people crushed, and the communal nature that once bound their communities replaced by European domination.

### **The Consequences of the Nineteenth Century**

The culmination of events in the nineteenth century led to the Mining or Mineral Revolution and a complete transformation of indigenous economies, trade networks, strategies of survival, and daily traditional life ways. The discovery of diamonds and gold signaled for African states the loss of control over South African natural resources and their full incorporation into an industrial capitalist and white-dominated economy (Crush et. al. 1991; Turrell 1987; Johnstone 1976; Crais 1992). On an international level, mining industries attracted foreign investment, competition between the South African colonial powers (hence the height of British imperialism), and merchants who built local markets especially designed to meet the needs of miners (Harries 1994). Individual

entrepreneurs from Southern Africa, Europe, Australia, and America rushed to the mines to find valuable diamonds and gold.

It in the past, foreign suppliers made their profits from shipping foreign goods to the Eastern Cape and taking a distant interest in the success of trade at the Cape. Their interest in the Cape depended on a steady demand of products that maintained their economic success. As they built industries in Europe, their goods passed from one trader to the next making their way around the world and to South Africa.

For the Cape, the discovery of gold and diamonds changed this foreign interest. These valuable resources brought not just foreign goods to the Cape or missionaries and farmers, but they attracted foreign investors as well as migrant workers from other Southern African countries.

The exploitation of South Africa's vast mineral wealth meant that all of a sudden there was a desperate need for large amounts of "cheap" labor and a resurgent interest in political control of the land (Jeeves 1985; Harries 1994).<sup>7</sup> In order to assert their claims, protect their interests, and maximize their economic benefits, the colony established more taxes and laws restricting the movement of the Xhosa as well as all other black Africans. They were more fervent in controlling indigenous rights to land, and the types of jobs available to them (Johnstone 1976; Shillington 1987).

When local Africans sought other options from the detrimental conditions of the underground mines, mining companies sought non-local workers. Migrants came from all over Southern Africa, including areas such as Mozambique, Southern Rhodesia

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<sup>7</sup> Levy (1982:22-26) states that the notion of a "cheap" labor force needs closer examination. He argues that as a result of all the coercive elements (taxes, being forced onto reserves) pushing black workers into a system of migrant labor, for Africans the system was not necessarily "cheap". The system was geared to be cheap only for the white mine owner.

(Zimbabwe), Bechuanaland (Botswana), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), and China (cf. Harries 1994, Jeeves 1985; Crush et. al. 1991).

Recruiters attracted them with high wages and liquor (Crush and Ambler 1992). Some chiefs and political leaders sent their young men to the mines for the benefit of others. Chief Modgatle, the Bafokeng leader in 1867, sent male migrants to the Kimberly mines. He used a portion of each man's earnings (five pounds) in order to buy farms for the rest of his people (Bozzoli 1991: 37, 47). Other migrants sought goods such as guns and cloth that they could purchase in nearby markets. Still others came for the opportunities for literacy (Wilson 1972; Harries 1994; Turrell 1987). The Tsonga worked in the Kimberly mines to improve kinship relations by earning enough for bridewealth, cattle, and consumer goods (Turrell 1987:23). This flood of migrants resulted in the growth of large urban cities, such as Johannesburg and Kimberly.

To force Africans into being subservient laborers for the mines and railroad stations, the colony placed further controls on the development of agriculture. Colonial elites saw the access to lands and mines as the key to their economic and political power. If they could control ownership and management of these resources, they would control the Xhosa. This was in direct opposition to the economic self-sufficiency Africans experienced during the days of independence (Harries 1994; Worger 1987). Colonial policies insinuated a situation completely different from days remembered during the Fort Willshire trade fairs.

Overtaking the remaining independent African nations, the British started channeling Africans onto "Native Reserves". This served as another check or control over indigenous freedoms and insured their dependence on work in the mines, farms, and

railways. This in turn insured the capital generated by their labor. Without access to the land and abilities to use the land, the Xhosa had no alternatives but to live off the mineral industries.

Marianna Edmunds (1981:158) points out that although colonial powers imposed their practices on African social structures as early as the seventeenth century, a "full-scale European capitalist penetration did not occur until the end of the nineteenth century". The discovery of the Kimberly diamonds and Witwatersrand gold launched another transformation of South Africa's social, political, and economic make-up. The production of gold and diamonds demanded the mobilization of labor, investment of capital, and new costly technology (Kubicek 1991:64).

The economic policies and mercantile structures of each period were drastically different in terms of their impact on African people. Before the mineral discoveries, South Africa was involved in the world economy (Switzer 1993; Bundy 1979), but not to the extent as the following period. The surplus of agricultural products such as meat, wine, and wheat mainly served the local market. There were vastly more imports than exports and agricultural prices were stable (Switzer 1993). After the mineral discoveries, South Africa shifted its economic center to the mineral industries thus causing agriculture to focus on the demands of the mines and the surrounding urban communities.

Before the mineral revolution, Africans were able to farm independently, raise cattle, and produce their own products for local trade. An indigenous merchant class developed and prospered from extensive trade relations. The continued success of trade encouraged colonial traders to venture further into the interior of South Africa.

The Cattle Killing Movement and the Mineral Revolution signaled major changes for trade networks in the Eastern Cape. The Xhosa lost large areas of land and most of their cattle (Worger 1987; Harries 1994; Switzer 1993). They were forced onto reserves, mining compounds, and urban areas. These restrictions allowed colonial elites to watch and control the African population. The mineral discoveries signaled an industrial revolution and caused dramatic changes in the social and political system of Africans.

### **Conclusion**

The history of the region has influenced the people currently living in the area. Trade was one of the catalysts that coincided with these shifts in subsistence strategies, adaptations to loss of land, and changes in social relations. The devastating events, including encroachment of the British, the violent Frontier Wars, drought, famine, cattle lung-sickness and the Mfecane played a role in the eventual downfall of Xhosa independence. For years, the Xhosa struggled with the moving frontier zone on the west and expelled Zulu populations moving further south. With fluctuating borders and devastating droughts, grazing pastures and viable land became scarce.

These themes reoccurred throughout the history of the Xhosa people after colonial contact. In the nineteenth century, colonial settlers and British officials moved into indigenous lands. In the twentieth century, colonial farmers moved into these areas and game reserve officials claimed and fenced off large areas. Once areas for grazing, hunting, and sprawling homesteads, these regions became restricted to the Xhosa people.

The fight for land and needed resources remain an issue of concern for Xhosa people today. The conditions of cultural change during the colonial period are analogous to the economic and political conditions currently facing the Xhosa. The past is related to

how the Xhosa construct current political agendas and make everyday economic decisions. As such, Xhosa interests, the ways in which they view the past, and how they place meaning on the landscape reveal how contact, interaction, and trade effect cultural change from the past to the present throughout the Keiskamma River Valley.

## CHAPTER 4 ORAL TRADITIONS

The oral history and traditions of the Xhosa people are a necessary part of understanding the history of the Eastern Cape. Although some scholars (Henige 1982) question whether or not we can actually obtain unique and reliable information from these sources, others (Hall 1990b, Schmidt 1997, Vansina 1985) recognize their value for forming a more holistic African historiography. Oral traditions have enhanced many archaeological projects (e.g. Maggs 1976, Mason 1986, Posnansky 1966, Schmidt 1997).

Particularly in Africa, some archaeologists have created a long-standing tradition that considers oral sources as an important part of archaeological practice. Investigating the debates surrounding the origins of the kingdoms of Uganda, Merrick Posnansky (1966b) turned towards historical myths and oral traditions to inform him about political structures, lines of kingship and lineage, and local histories related to the archaeological record. His use of different sources enabled him to identify large gaps in the evidence that was used to support different hypotheses, including those attributing origins of kingdoms to the Hamites, Cushites, Nilotic Lwoo, and the Bantu. By studying the archaeological record in relation to oral traditions, he was able to conclude:

It is premature to accept any single hypothesis to explain either direct links between Uganda and other cultural areas, such as Ethiopia and Meroë or the role of the Nile Valley civilizations in the diffusion of political ideas and institutions (10).

Like Posnansky, Peter Schmidt (1997) used oral sources to understand the political and social relations as they pertained to interpretations of the archaeological record in northwestern Tanzania. Working with the Haya people, he “peeled back the onion skin of history” to gain insight about the political shifts in indigenous power and the symbolic understandings of Haya culture.<sup>1</sup> He compared the research of oral traditions to the process of archaeological excavation; each involving stratified layers holding unique parts critical to the understanding of history as a whole.

Through Posnansky’s and Schmidt’s work, we can see the benefits of multiple sources for richer interpretations of the past. Since oral traditions often provide unique insights, they should be recognized as a vital source of information. Many oral traditions in South Africa exhibit the wealth of information about indigenous people, past historical events, and symbolic understandings of culture.

In the Keiskamma River Valley, oral traditions help to fill in the overlooked details of local history. They attest to the migratory patterns of the Xhosa people and to the cultural landscape surrounding Fort Willshire. They provide a means for understanding political relations and social divisions through an indigenous ideological lens. They also provide insight about the ways in which the Xhosa interpreted their cultural environment. How did the Xhosa view their world and how did this view change as a result of colonial trade and interaction? What types of symbolic beliefs influenced them during a turbulent contact period? Which traditions did the Xhosa uphold while the impact of colonial contact changed their material world? Xhosa oral traditions provide answers to these questions. They also make the literature more relevant to the concerns

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<sup>1</sup> Eva Hunt (1977) first used the metaphor “peeling back the onion skin of history” to refer to unfolding the various layers of historical and ritual texts to obtain different meanings.



of the Xhosa people, and they elicit interest in a past that blacks share with white South Africans.

According to Harold Scheub (1998), some stories within Xhosa oral traditions incorporate fantasy tales similar to Christian tales. Others are told within the context of real events and activities in combination with the emotional framework of the oral performer.

The stories within the tradition intensified the influence of that framework, as other storytellers took images from the tradition and moved them in directions of their own choosing, but always working from the core that gives birth to many of the stories (Scheub 1998:227).

Throughout Xhosa oral traditions, folktales, and history, there is a core set of thematic elements that carry the main story from one generation to the next and from one performer to the next. Despite creative divergence, the core of the story often reveals either Xhosa ideology and worldview or representations of historical events, cultural practices, and elements of a reality surrounding the performer and his or her community.

By working with Nongenile Masithathu Zenani, a master storyteller of the Xhosa people, Harold Scheub (1998) was able to study the interplay between her depiction of the world as it exists and her performance of the oral tradition as it is shaped by her relationship with her audience, her own artistry with her chosen words, and cultural influences pressing upon her (also see Zenani 1992). He notes that:

For Nongenile Masithathu Zenani, the products of the Xhosa oral imaginative tradition reveal, through the graphic imagery of fantasy, vital truths about her society and its history. The oral tale is the conduit to the past; its alchemizing force allows open and full access to that past. "The art of composing oral narratives," she told me, "is something that was undertaken by the first people – long ago, during the time of the ancestors. When those of us in my generation awakened into earliest consciousness, we were born into a tradition that was already flourishing." It is not surprising that no distinct line demarcates Mrs. Zenani's creative stories and the events of her own life. The plotting of fictional

imagery sometimes gives way to the detailed depiction of, for example, a rite of passage distilled from her history.” The rites of passage remain for her significant centers of the story-telling tradition as of her life (Scheub 1998: 226).

Despite Zenani’s creative modifications of the stories, she presents historical and cultural aspects of the Xhosa world. Through her work with Scheub, she offers a window to the origins of Xhosa customs, stages of life from birth to death, and ways in which the Xhosa place meaning on their environment (see Scheub 1998, Zenani 1992). Like her, the elders from the Keiskamma River Valley also offered significant information about the past. While some provided only one or two pieces of relevant insights, others offered details directly related to the cultural past within the Middledrift District.

In Zenani’s stories, traditions collected from communities surrounding Fort Willshire, and interviews with other Xhosa elders, I had an opportunity to access the past from different perspectives. My goal was to analyze oral testimonies, histories, and stories for specific historical data, cultural insights, temporal changes, and indigenous perspectives about the past that may or may not have differed from written colonial accounts.

Within this chapter, I specifically address these issues, review the debates surrounding oral traditions, and discuss oral traditions pertaining to the questions asked at Fort Willshire. This chapter presents: 1) a discussion of oral traditions as a valid source of indigenous understandings of their cultural environment and local histories, 2) a presentation of the methods used to collect oral testimony in the Eastern Cape, 3) a description of these oral traditions and testimonies, and 4) an analysis and interpretation of this evidence. Throughout this chapter, I present the oral traditions of the Xhosa

people as a significant tool for understanding a South African past and for enhancing archaeological interpretations.

### **The Significance of Oral Traditions as a Source of Indigenous Knowledge**

In South Africa, few archaeologists have collected oral traditions. A number of reasons account for this oversight. In the past, archaeology was often manipulated to justify political agendas (Hall 1990b). The use of black voices, concerns, and topics was perceived as a threat to scholars themselves and their historical and archaeological practice. In a climate of separatism during the apartheid era, perhaps some archaeologists avoided collecting oral traditions because they worried about placing themselves in politically charged and dangerous environments. Others working with indigenous Khoisan people often found it difficult to find key informants. With the current political climate in the new South Africa and the successful use of oral sources within some archaeological projects, more archaeologists must now view oral sources of information as they do written sources, as a valid and pertinent source of unique information.

According to Peter Schmidt (1997), if we are to achieve a more humanistic and scientific archaeology, we must meet the challenge of decoding the messages within oral history. In his effort to address false historical representations surrounding iron technology, he uses oral traditions and archaeological evidence in the Buhaya region of Tanzania to uncover the symbolic meanings embedded in traditional methods of iron production. He uses multiple sources to better understand cultural and historical roles of iron technology from a scientific perspective and from voices of local African interpretations.

In South Africa, oral traditions present significant insights for interpreting the landscape, understanding archaeological problems, and explaining cultural behavior. The oral traditions and testimony of the Middledrift District within the Keiskamma River Valley specifically document Gqunukhwebe Xhosa history, political and social relations, and migrations in and out of the area. They offer insight about the significance of beads and cattle, taboos against rivers, and lost practices such as ceramic production. They also provide insight about the use of domestic space, family relations, the symbolic meanings behind other cultural materials, and social divisions of the landscape.

Specific testimonies collected for this project offer glimpses of changing political and social relations between the Xhosa and the British during the nineteenth century. They help us understand how the Xhosa struggled for power, resources, and labor. As Xhosa chiefs and traders aligned with colonial counterparts for personal gain, they increased their dependence on colonial goods. Individuals took advantage of colonial support to enhance their own economic and political positions. Stories of specific past events document this process of dependence.

While the oral traditions demonstrate the material conditions contributing to changing behaviors, they also reflect the Xhosa's symbolic understandings of the landscape and their view of the world around them. Through myth, legend, oral traditions, and oral history, we can see how ideology is used to organize the environment, justify social and political relations, and create cohesiveness among Xhosa individuals. The oral traditions allow the Xhosa to interpret adapted aspects of colonial culture as if they were always a natural part of indigenous practices. Within the traditions, the Xhosa assimilate colonial religious beliefs, ideas about death, notions of propriety,

understandings about the natural environment, and political and gender roles in relation to divisions of labor. Using the traditions as a medium for facilitating change on their own terms, they were able to maintain autonomy despite colonial hegemony.

The collected oral traditions from the Middledrift District carry us from the days of Xhosa independence to the days of communal living in the post-apartheid South Africa. Elders recount stories of the region and the various people that moved in and out of the area. Different Xhosa chiefs lived off the land with missionaries, Khoisan people, and early colonial farmers. They remember their grandfathers' stories about neighboring Khoi and colonial farmers. They can account for the movement of the Ngqika Xhosa out of the area, and the settlement of the Gqunukhwebe Xhosa chiefdom in their place, a presence that remains in the area today. Oral traditions document a transition across the landscape that took place in the early nineteenth century shortly after the closing of Fort Willshire.

Elders also recount stories relating to both the ideology and the history of the Xhosa people. They believe in the people from the river, witches responsible for famine and disease, and mystical events surrounding death. Those individuals endowed with the responsibility of remembering oral traditions, the keepers of history, describe the official histories of the Gqunukhwebe, and how they came to live in the Middledrift District. A few accounts recall the Gqunukhwebe ancestors as marginalized people who were persecuted for witchcraft. Oral traditions document royal lineages and memorable events associated with each chief or fearless man. They describe ordinary people endowed with the courage to kill lions.

Oral traditions also recount the details of major events that changed Xhosa life. They describe famine, drought, and the spread of disease. They recall in detail the Great Xhosa Cattle Killing Movement, an event that led to the full reliance of the Xhosa people on colonial goods and a colonial government (see Chapter 3). The Xhosa also relate stories about life in the mines, changes due to forced relocation, and the impact of encroaching colonial farmers as they subsequently lost more land.

Some elders used the interview as an opportunity to voice their own personal stories. After outlining their knowledge of the distant past, they described personal tragedies from the days of apartheid. Women would discuss life in the absence of men who were sent to the mining fields. Some men would discuss the continuing loss of land or lack of resources provided by the government. Others would voice concerns about the neighboring game reserve, past confrontations, and ongoing relations. They remembered days when they were prohibited from crossing the Keiskamma River to access grazing land for their cattle or to use areas on the landscape for rituals and traditional ceremonies. When they violated reserve policy, vicious dogs were sent to their villages. Although past relations with game park officials were tense, Xhosa elders recognize the current changes being made to create better relations between the reserve and neighboring communities.

Throughout the oral traditions collected in the Keiskamma River Valley, the Xhosa used their interpretations of the past, repetitive themes, and the similarities between the present and the past to describe their current political positions. Through stories of the past, we can see issues of contention that seem to stimulate Xhosa expectations of the government. Oral traditions provide a valuable source of historical

data, aid in the interpretation of archaeological sites, and present the voice and concerns of black South Africans, a neglected presence in the South African historiography. While this chapter provides a glimpse of the collected oral traditions and highlights only those most relevant to the focus of the project, some information obtained from interviews, yet not mentioned in this chapter, is woven into previous and following chapters.

### **Methods for Collecting Oral Traditions**

The process of collecting oral traditions and historical testimony and discovering the insights mentioned above involved a variety of assistants, many informants, and different methods. While informal interviews were conducted with members of my crew, associates from the Albany Museum, and Xhosa friends, formal interviews were conducted with Xhosa elders from each village in the study area. Informants came from four villages, including Ngcabasa, Nqolowa, Qibirha, and Dikidikana (see figure 1.2).

Before I began interviews, I met with the chairman of each village to present the project and obtain research permission. After assessing the benefits and possible repercussions of my work, each chairman gave their consent to interview elders. In Ngcabasa and Dikidikana, they scheduled additional community meetings to introduce me to the elders and the rest of the people living in the location. To insure my safety and the safety of my crew, we tried to establish a relationship with the entire village. It was essential for members of the community to recognize the project, respect the approval of the chairman, and endorse his invitation to work in the area. Obtaining the collective permission of elders and other individuals of the community made it easier for us to come and go without raising suspicion.

Communal meetings also provided valuable insight. The presentation of my research usually stimulated lively discussions from the crowd. These events were as valuable as the smaller focus groups that were later arranged with elders. From these initial meetings, I identified people who were more knowledgeable about Xhosa history. Watching interactions between people, I ascertained their reputations and defined various types of relationships. Occasionally people would scream out, "don't listen to him; he's crazy" or "he knows the answer; talk to him". A few would simultaneously begin recounting different stories about Xhosa history.

Although mostly men attended these communal meetings, a few elderly women came to all but two of the meetings. Those that attended were often either middle-aged individuals or elders. Except for one or two babies and small children, children were absent during these events. One chairman told me that the children were at school and that the women were either at school or at home taking care of other children. People also missed meetings due to funeral preparations. In addition, while men regularly met to discuss the problems or concerns of their community apart from my research, women often socialized in more informal settings as they engaged in other activities.

The people that did attend the meetings brought up specific issues that concerned the community. They talked about past relationships with local farmers and the Double Drift Game Reserve. They often discussed the lack of viable land resources, agricultural needs, requests for aid from foreign donors, and the community's relationship with the new South African government. They also talked about the pressing needs of their community and their options for fulfilling those needs.



During our meetings, they were primarily concerned with the benefits that research would bring to their community. When questioned about this issue, I described the importance of written history and the lack of a substantial Xhosa perspective in written historical texts. I highlighted the value of museum collections for education, raising awareness about Xhosa traditions in an international community, and preserving their heritage for a more complete South African history.

Discussion of these issues often revealed the vast differences between indigenous systems of preserving history and other institutions that collect and study indigenous culture. Reactions to my presentations revealed the lack of interaction between indigenous communities and these institutions. In Dikidikana, some people never had the opportunity to visit a museum and were altogether unfamiliar with the concept of a "museum". They needed more information to understand the purpose of these types of institutions and the value of working with researchers. Under these circumstances, it was difficult to present the benefits of a museum and the value of published history. When I described the Albany museum as a place to preserve stories and items from the past, I was told that the Xhosa keep their own stories and treasures passed down from their ancestors.

Despite these difficulties, elders were eager to assist me. Often conversations about my research would turn into conversations about their past. During these meetings, individuals could see others respond enthusiastically to my work. With the chairman's approval and the positive responses from the community, I had the legitimacy needed to begin my research.

After each meeting, chairmen and a few elders of the community would give us a tour of the region, point out specific sites of past settlements, and give us an introduction to the local vegetation. They told stories about their ancestors, identified medicinal and traditional plants, and pointed out sacred sites.

After this initial introduction to the area, chairmen would chose informants and arrange the basic logistics of the interviews. I agreed to work with chairmen in this manner for many reasons. I wanted to show respect for their social structure, their



Figure 4.1 Chairman of Dikidikana and Elders



Figure 4.2 View of Dikidikana

hierarchy of power, and the chairmen themselves. Most informants were more receptive once they knew I had the permission of their chairman. Despite community meetings, some would refuse to speak to me unless I was accompanied by the chairman or the chairman spoke to them beforehand. To facilitate interviews, the chairman would often schedule meetings and introduce me to the interviewee. He would use his influence to make sure informants showed up at set times on specific days. The chairmen would also schedule community events, funerals, and various meetings. Special events gave me the

opportunity to document ritual ceremonies, observe cultural traditions, and interview people in a more casual setting.

Introducing me to certain individuals in the community, many chairmen said that they wanted to make sure I talked to the people that “kept” Xhosa history. Implying that only certain men were the keepers of official Xhosa history, the chairman of each village often arranged interviews with a few of these selected men. In addition to these interviews, I specifically requested to interview women. While men often knew the official history of the Xhosa, women often knew more about domestic space, the history of pottery production, changes in clothing traditions, and everyday activities. More men were inclined to describe the political significance of beads, while women were more inclined to describe the symbolic, ethnic, and social uses of beads.

Although each chairman initiated interviews with specific members of the community, they were willing to facilitate interviews with other people. In Ngcabasa and Dikidikana, chairmen scheduled one to one interviews. In Nqolowa and Qibirha, chairmen arranged both one to one interviews and focus groups. While one to one interviews tended to be more in-depth, focus groups were more efficient. In focus groups, I easily filtered out people who had little knowledge of collective Xhosa history. Also, individuals in focus groups were more likely to trigger each other’s memories and remind each other of particular events.

Unfortunately, some women were reluctant to speak in mixed groups. Interviews with groups of women were more successful than interviews with women in mixed groups. Women with higher status tended to have more knowledge of the past or were more comfortable speaking during interviews. My interview with the mother of the Great

Chief Kama lasted for four hours and revealed detailed information about Xhosa traditions. She described traditional clothing, personal adornment, and the practice of scarring. She also offered insight about the role of beads as symbols of wealth, royalty, courtship, age groups, and chiefdom affiliation.

Since each interview lasted an average of thirty minutes to four hours, I organized meetings at least one week before my visit to the village. I made arrangements in the field because it was difficult to contact people by phone. Some shared a single phone located in their local general store. Others traveled to the phones in Alice, King Williamstown, or Grahamstown. To insure appointments, I scheduled days with the chairmen and planned full days in each location. Interview days were also scheduled around the availability of translators.

I worked with six different translators and two transcribers. Two of the translators were employees of the Double Drift Game Reserve. A complex set of interactions developed because of their positions as officials from the reserve. While their identities sometimes facilitated interviews, at other times, the roles they represented caused tension and heated discussions. One of the translators came from the Middledrift District and had the same clan name as the Ngcabasa chairman. As a clan member, he was able to invite me to the traditional ceremonies and community social gatherings that otherwise might not have been possible.

At other times, when people discovered that the translator worked at the game reserve, they would complain about the reserve and its treatment of the community. Tension would always diffuse once they learned about my research, my institutional affiliations, and my American citizenship. With approval from the chairmen and certain

elders, I gained the trust of other elders and continued my qualitative in-depth interviews. I completed thirty interviews.<sup>2</sup>

The interviews were translated by different assistants during the interviews themselves, tape recorded, and later translated again and transcribed by a separate assistant. After I received a written translation of each interview, I chose a few of these for a second review. A different assistant would double-check the translations against the taped versions. I also checked the reliability of each interview by reviewing the accuracy of the English. This procedure allowed me to check the abilities of my assistants as well as review the content of the interviews before I conducted more interviews. Once interviews were completed, they were analyzed using QSR NUD\*IST,<sup>3</sup> a software program that revealed thematic patterns in the traditions. The questionnaire was also refined in between each interview as some questions proved to be more effective in obtaining relevant information.

### **Questions for the Elders**

Interviews with elders started with questions about their birth. To stimulate their memories of the past and determine the time depth and origin of their oral traditions, I asked about their ages, the year they were born, and the location of their birth. Occasionally, individuals had trouble answering the questions about their age. In those

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<sup>2</sup> Although I conducted thirty interviews during my year of fieldwork, I unfortunately lost most of this information. A highly recommended translator turned out to be an alcoholic. To support his habit, he sold the tapes of my interview with the Great Chief's mother and my tape recorder. Other thieves stole over half of my written transcriptions and the corresponding tapes. Despite this set back, I was able to save eight complete interviews and notes from others. From these interviews, I gained valuable insight.

<sup>3</sup> QSR NUD\*IST is a software product designed for qualitative data analysis. The name stands for non-numeric, unstructured, data, index, searching and theorizing. Using this software to organize and analyze my interviews, I was able to index, search, and interpret my qualitative information. I chose significant key words that reappeared throughout the interviews. These key words helped me design a new index for my collection of interviews.

cases, I asked them if they were born during any historical or major events. Some said that they were born during natural disasters; "I was born around about the year of the great drought". Associating these events with particular dates, I could estimate their age and an approximate year of birth.

I also asked them about their clan or praise names. While only a few had praise names, each individual had a clan name. Only paramount chiefs, kings, and members of the royal family have praise names, which are titles of respect. Those with the same clan name on the other hand have a common ancestor. Each person interviewed could tell me their clan name, the meaning behind it, and some stories associated with members of that same clan name.

After asking each person about their personal background, I asked the same series of questions about their parents and their grandparents. This line of questioning often helped me construct a family tree, which most of the time was patrilineal. By grouping questions according to specific generations, I helped informants organize their stories in chronological order. I was also able to date stories in terms of average life spans and generations. I asked them to recount stories they heard from their grandparents and the stories their grandparents in turn heard from their own grandparents.

Information about the birth of their parents and grandparents often provided insight for tracing migration patterns. Most informants that could remember their parents' place of birth could also remember when and why their parents or grandparents first moved into the Keiskamma River Valley. One elder claimed that his ancestors fled from the Zulu Chief Shaka. Shaka ordered his grandfather to kill a lion. Afraid of this

challenge and the wrath of Shaka, this man left Zululand and moved into the Middledrift District.

In addition to asking about an individual's family and ancestry, I asked questions directly related to Fort Willshire, the Keiskamma River Valley, and contact with the British during the nineteenth century. Although informants knew little about the trade fairs, some still provided information that dated to the nineteenth century. While one story depicted nineteenth century British soldiers plummeting to their deaths in the Keiskamma River (see section on "River Stories"), other stories described land disputes, interactions between the Xhosa and the Khoisan, and the origins of the Gqunukhwebe Xhosa.

They provided pertinent information for analyzing archaeological sites on the landscape. Informants identified characteristics of the natural environment and the different meanings placed on that environment. Drawing this information out, I posed questions that focused on the river, differences in the vegetation, and plants used for everyday, medicinal, and traditional purposes (see Chapter 5). I asked them about sacred areas and places associated with traditional rituals, and I inquired about the layout of settlements and the locations of activity areas within past settlements. Questions also centered on changes in ceramic production, forging, and the manufacturing of tools.

While gathering specific information about everyday past and present activities, I obtained an understanding of Xhosa traditions and worldviews from stories of the landscape. Certain stories about the river and Gqunukhwebe origins gave me insight on Xhosa ideology as well as descriptions of material conditions. They provided information about migratory patterns, spatial organization, and political and social

relations. In particular, different versions of Gqunukhwebe origins, as seen in the next section, gave a glimpse into the intersection between ideology and political relations.

### **The Gqunukhwebe Xhosa**

When Ngqika's people left the valley surrounding Fort Willshire, the colonial military occupied the territory until the Gqunukhwebe Xhosa migrated into the area and settled under Chief Kama. A number of traditions account for the rise of the Gqunukhwebe and how they came to live in the Keiskamma River Valley. Elders from the Middledrift District remember the tradition that traces the origins of the Gqunukhwebe chiefdom to the dark days of witchcraft accusations and executions during the reign of Togu's grandson, King Tshiwo.

To maintain control over his people, the King ordered his executioners to kill those condemned of witchcraft. Among the accused, he often included affluent and wealthy councilors that threatened his authority (Qomfo 1998). By eliminating his competitors, he could control the economic distribution within his chiefdom and the amount of power and influence attained by certain men. The process of regulating the wealth of councilors was a common practice among different Xhosa chiefs. They removed those that threatened chiefly power, and they gained the support for their actions by employing the dominant ideology of their commoners. The fear of witches allowed chiefs to remove individuals without significant repercussions from their people.

According to some elders, King Tshiwo used his favorite councilor, Khwane, to carry out his objectives and rid his territory of people who threatened him. During this time, Xhosa territory reached as far as the Mthatha and Mbhashe rivers. Khwane, the executioner, lived on the eastern side of the Mbhashe River. Some say that Khwane



followed out the King's orders and systematically killed those found to be guilty of witchcraft. Others claim that instead of killing the condemned, he secretly spared their lives and hid them in the land of the Gqunuqhwa Khoi (Yekela 1988, Qomfo 1998). There they intermarried with the Gqunuqhwa and prospered as a growing community (Peires 1982:25).

As this secret chieftdom blossomed, the Tshiwo kingdom began to lose strength and became vulnerable to its enemies. The Ngqosini clan leader, Gaba, decided it was an ideal time to take advantage of this weak state by challenging King Tshiwo and the ruling status of the Tshawe clan. By declaring his independence, he was initiating war. Recognizing the King's inability to successfully defend the nation, Khwane revealed his hidden army and led them in defense of King Tshiwo. With this power, the tides turned for the King and the Tshawe clan defeated the Ngqosini. As a reward, the King granted Khwane a chieftainship over these once condemned people, gave him the land of his choosing, and allowed him to develop a settlement for his people.

Khwane's reward for his help was being crowned as Chief of those people in the veld. Tshiwo said go to those people. They are yours (Qomfo 1998).

The new Gqunuqhwa-Khwane kingdom saluted their chief "Ah Sobantu", which means Yise wabantu or father of the people (Rubusana 1906 in Yekela 1988:4).

Given a chance to live, they most likely looked up to Khwane and gave him their gratitude. Yekela (1988) suggests that Khwane may have benefited from their appreciation by collecting tribute and assuming the power and prestige of being their pseudo-chief. Since they owed him their lives, they were obliged to honor and respect him.

In another version of the tradition, Tunyiswa claims that Khwane was a descendant of the Vundle clan in Lesotho (Yekela 1988). Once Khwane arrived in Tshiwo's land, he gained the confidence of the King. Hoping that a stranger and foreigner would be less likely to fraternize with the commoners, the King entrusted Khwane with the task of killing those condemned of witchcraft. According to the tradition, Khwane carried out his orders until a young man convinced him to spare his life. From that day forward, Khwane concentrated his efforts on building a new nation despite the orders of the King.

According to the Reverend H.H. Dugmore (1906), there were two councilors appointed to carry out the execution of suspected witches as well as the confiscation of cattle. Khwane was well liked amongst the commoners and a favorite of the King, whereas the second councilor was feared for his ruthlessness. Unlike his counterpart, Khwane occasionally spared life and left victims with a few cattle. He continued this work until his co-executioner threatened to expose him. Forced to confess, Khwane brought his case to the King, claiming to have better served his interests. Responding favorably, King Tshiwo granted Khwane the power to rule over these formerly condemned witches.

With a few exceptions, Gqoba's version of the tradition supports Dugmore's account. Gqoba also documents the existence of two councilors, however he makes no distinction between the characters of the two men. Yekela (1988) argues that:

It is likely that Dugmore's story-tellers tampered with the real facts to avoid damaging the image of the founder of their nation whom they had every reason to admire and adorn and who in any case had, by confessing, made good his guilt (7).

Yekela (1988) doubts that the King would have favored Khwane's disloyal acts over his faithful councilor. Unless the benefits of Khwane's behavior overshadowed his betrayal, the King would most likely have punished Khwane for his acts of defiance. Yekela argues that Khwane's heroic actions made such a great impact on Tshiwo that Tshiwo was forced to relinquish wholehearted gratitude.

Despite the various versions of how the Gqunukhwebe became a new chiefdom, all of them seem to document the rise of Khwane as the Gqunukhwebe leader. They further seem to agree that Khwane was not part of the original family of hereditary chiefs. Khwane gained the power allotted to the Tshawe clan name, however he was not related by blood to the rest of the royal group. Although the original royal Tshawe were designated AmaTshawe emiDange, Khwane's people were called AmaTshawe kaKhwane (Yekela 1988:8).

The relationship between the two Tshawe groups permitted intermarriage within the clan. Khwane's descendent, Kama, was allowed to marry Ngqika's daughter Nongwane. He took her as his only wife. More recently, the daughter of Chief Siseko Kama, Nondwendwe married a descendant of Chief Gcaleka, Chief Salakuphathwa (Yekela 1988).

In an interview, the elder Qomfo (1998) constructed a family tree that traced the relationships of the current chief back to that of Khwane.

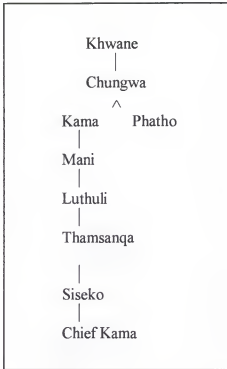


Figure 4.3 Lineage of the Great Chief Khwane

The praise name of Thamsanqa is “Ah! Vulumhlaba”. The praise name of Siseko, the father of the present chief, is “Ah! Dilizintabe”, and the praise name of the Chief is “Ah! Zwlimjongile”.

Qomfo (1998) tells a different story about the origins of the Gqunukhwebe and how they came to live in the Keiskamma River Valley. According to Qomfo (1998), at the time of “Tshiwo the Chief”, all the rich people were suspected of being witches. Khwane was responsible for killing the witches, but since he was brave and not cruel, he spared their lives in the forest. Only when Khwane saw the enemy defeating Tshiwo, did he go to the forest to bring back those formerly condemned of witchcraft. As a reward for saving the chieftdom, Tshiwo crowned Khwane as Chief of those people in the forest.

Eventually, Khwane and his people migrated to Thwecu and then from Thwecu to Peddie. Kama and Phatho, descendents of Khwane were more aggressive than their ancestor. Kama left Phatho to look for land. He fought the Khoi people at Whittlesea and eventually made his way to the Middledrift District. The people in the area today are "the generation of Khwane".

According to Qomfo (1998), the Reverend William Shaw left Grahamstown to preach to Kama at Thwecu. Influenced by the Reverend Shaw's teaching, Kama decided to convert to Christianity, leave his brother Phatho in Peddie, and look for land in Lesotho. Kama's arrival however was ill received and he was chased out of Sotho territory for fear that he was an informer. He fled the area by crossing the Orange River and headed towards Hewu in Whittlesea. Soon after his safe crossing, the river flooded and protected him from Sotho enemies.

In Whittlesea, Kama discovered that the British army was in a heated battle against the Khoi.<sup>4</sup> When the British ran out of gunpowder, the Khoi took the opportunity to turn the tides and began defeating the British. The British subsequently turned toward Kama and his people for aid. Under this new collaborative effort, the British had the power to defeat the Khoi.

According to Qomfo (1998), the English Governor Sir Benjamin Cathcart was so grateful for Kama's assistance that he gave Kama the land of the Ngqika/Nonqwane. At the time, the son of Ngqika, Chief Sandile owned this land. The British chased Sandile off the land and granted the land to Kama and his people. This land included Mdiza and

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<sup>4</sup> In his oral testimony, Qomfo refers to the Khoi as "Hottentots".

Ngcabasa. All of this land was given to the Gqunukhwebe chiefdom. Today, the Gqunukhwebe still occupy the area of the Middledrift District.

Qomfo claimed that after Kama took the land, he sent six men to Sandile to inform him of the new arrangements. They were to tell Sandile that Sir Benjamin Cathcart gave this land to Kama. According to Qomfo, Sandile responded without military action. Although Sandile felt that the British were chasing him from his land, he decided to relinquish control over the area and put his people in the care of Kama. Kama ruled over Sandile's people as well as his own. According to Qomfo, the two chiefs never entered into battle over the region. In fact, Kama never entered into battle with Ngqika's people or the British. He only assisted the British and offered military support when they needed help to fulfill their objectives against the Khoi. Qomfo acknowledges that although there were battles between whites and blacks, Kama only fought when he was helping the English. Unlike other Xhosa chiefs such as Phatho and Ndlambe who fought the English in the areas surrounding Grahamstown, Kama protected his alliance with the colony because he relied on its protection.

A beaten man, Sandile resettled in Gqolonci, at Mgwali. He gave up his land so easily because the British had already defeated him. Now in charge of Sandile's people, Kama's chiefdom grew in size. Qomfo indicated that although he could not tell exactly how many people were included in this kingdom, he knew that many lived in the area. Sandile's people lived in peace with Kama's people. According to Qomfo, Kama lived with Khoi people in Whittlesea until he left to live in the Middledrift region. He stayed in the Middledrift region until he died and was buried near the local church.

In his journal, R. J. Gordon claimed that by 1778 the territory of the Gqunukhwebe chiefs stretched west of the Bushmans River. According to Peires (1982), Khwane's descendent, Chungwa and his father, Tshaka, were firmly established in the area between the Fish and Sundays Rivers in the 1780s. Trying to appease the colonial government, they agreed to pay for their land or to rent it provided they were tied to the same regulations as the Boers. Yekela (1988:11) argues that the Gqunukhwebe settled west of the Fish River before the Plettenburg treaty of 1778 (see Chapter 3 for more details about the movement of the Gqunukhwebe).

Despite multiple versions describing migratory patterns of the Gqunukhwebe, oral traditions reveal that the area immediately surrounding Fort Willshire on the Keiskamma River was occupied and is still occupied by mostly Gqunukhwebe people. One elder claimed that the Gqunukhwebe pushed Ngqika's people out of the region. Another elder claimed that colonial officials disregarded the Ngqika people and proceeded to offer the lands to the Gqunukhwebe as a reward for collaborating with the colony.

In both the written records and oral traditions, it is clear that with the closing of Fort Willshire, Ngqika lost control over trade and his position of influence with the colony. Without incentive for colonial support, Ngqika was forced to move his people. Since the Christian Gqunukhwebe leaders successfully remained neutral in most of the violent frontier wars, they received benefits from their colonial collaborators and were allowed to settle in the Keiskamma region (see Chapter 3).

Peires (1989:174) argues that colonial authorities were able to strip traditional leaders of their power by taking action against witchcraft accusations. Without the threat of chiefly power, prosperous individuals could pursue economic opportunities offered by

the colony. According to oral traditions, the Gqunukhwebe chiefdom was born from an end to witchcraft persecutions. In addition, Chief Kama became a Christian leader, a decision that aligned him with the goals of Christian missionaries and the British government. Having an alliance with the colony, Kama was able to maintain his position and his people were able to benefit from the lands on the frontier border. While the Gqunukhwebe oral traditions document the history of the people who migrated into the Keiskamma area, Xhosa river stories document how the Xhosa negotiated their environment within the river valley.

### **The River Stories**

A number of oral traditions center around beliefs about rivers. They often reveal Xhosa ideology and religious beliefs. They also reflect responses to fluctuating frontier borders, subsistence patterns, and dangers associated with the rivers. The oral traditions collected in the Keiskamma River valley specifically describe rivers as sacred realms for the ancestors. Some stories document various forces in the river such as the river people, cattle, snakes, monsters, or dangerous powers.

Many of the elders from the Middledrift District believe that ghosts or people live in the rivers with their cattle (Nxandiwe 1989, Sazane 1989, Ntuthela 1989, Muvamuhle 1989). They claim to hear voices calling from the water whenever they attempt to cross. "Do not cross!" One elder warned, "If you keep on crossing they will call you by name and tell you that they are tired of you; 'don't cross here anymore'." According to Xhosa belief, if travelers want access to the river, they must worship the river people and ask for their permission. Since Xhosa elders believe the Gaba clan resides in the Keiskamma



River, they call their names, "Gaba" or "Cihoshe", as they approach the water's edge (Nxandiwe 1989).

*Isiziba* is the deep part of the river and the home of the river people. The Xhosa try to avoid traveling over this area and are especially wary of crossing at night. If they must pass over the river, they make sure to appease the water people and their cattle by throwing rocks over the area and presenting their reasons for crossing it.

Solomon Royi's (1998) version of the belief claims that the river people and their cattle share the river with other animals such as crocodiles and fowls. According to the tradition, the river people have human characteristics on the top and fishlike characteristics on the bottom. Although Royi has never seen this community, he has heard their cries.

As a young man living in the Middledrift District, Royi was responsible for retrieving the goats that would disappear in their community, yet reappear across the river. One sunset evening, when Royi threw a stone at one of the goats to prompt it to move, he heard the cry of a child. He believes this child belonged to the community of the river people.

Royi also recalls stories about a child who drowned in the river. Three days later when they found his body, they discovered that he was chained and his eyes were missing. Cikizwa Sazane (1989) remembers when another child from Ngcabasa also died in the Keiskamma River. Both informants believe that the chief of the river calls these children and other similar children to their deaths.

When adults die in the Keiskamma River however, traditions claim that they have angered the river people. Many informants remember a specific story from the

nineteenth century documenting the death of British soldiers. When the British failed to pay respect to the people living in the river, they struggled with something that pulled them into the water and consequently killed them. One elder claimed that they were fighting water monsters or angry sea cows. Others argued that the soldiers were using oxen to pull something out of the river. Suddenly when they started thrashing around violently, they drowned along with their cattle. Today, elders claim to see British ghosts walking along the edges of the Keiskamma.

Despite the various versions of the tradition, it seems clear that traders on both sides risked their lives when they went in the river. Grahamstown newspapers reported a number of deaths due to drowning in the Keiskamma. One article in particular described the drowning of two soldiers in the river during that time. Also supporting this tradition, graves found in close proximity to the fort as well as the original fort indicated that many people died during the early nineteenth century.

While several have drowned in the Keiskamma River, others claim to have fallen ill when they came into contact with the river people. One informant warned that without permission to cross, a person could face serious consequences. They could become sick, acquire a disease, and lose their voice or eyesight. To reverse the river curse, a complex healing process begins with the traditional doctor. The victim must apply river mud to their eyes. The traditional doctor builds a house near the river and the sick person lives there until he or she is better. *Ukufukama* refers to this healing process.

Although many victims blame the river people for their misfortunes, others accuse alternative forces in the water. According to Xhosa ideology, some explanations for diseases and illnesses are based on the powers of *Icanti*, *U-hili*, or *Tikoloshe* (Hewat

1906). These water creatures have the ability to influence a person's health and well-being. Using the influential power embedded in the beliefs, Xhosa women will sometimes perpetuate the tradition to serve their own individual goals. To keep or obtain someone's affection, women will often use any three of these traditions.

The *Icanti* is a water snake that will change colors, change its shape and form, and negatively affect certain people. A person who comes in contact with *Icanti* will suddenly become motionless and speechless. Women pass down the story of the *Icanti* from generation to generation because it provides them with a scapegoat for death and disease. Although women often ascribe diseases to the influence of the *Icanti*, both women and men believe in *Umamlambo*, the legend that snakes reside in all rivers.

While beliefs in the power of water snakes and snake like river creatures are prevalent, beliefs about other water beings still exist in the oral record. *U-hili* and *Tikoloshe* are short stumpy water creatures that are part human and half animal. One oral tradition claims that if a woman is fond of her husband and children, she has overcome the proposition of this dangerous figure. Her fortune is a reward for her resistance against the importunities and temptations of the *Tikoloshe*.

A competing tradition claims that the *Tikoloshe* is actually an animal that roams on land. Despite the contextual contradictions, the story conveys the same thematic elements. Ill fortune will come to those that disrespect the creature or the environmental factors represented by the creature. In this version, the *Tikoloshe* is "the animal who plays with children". "*Tikoloshe*" means dwarf and takes the form of a human being that threatens the welfare of children playing alone. Elders warn children to play in groups and run if confronted by this dangerous animal.

The taboos within Xhosa ideology serve to protect children as well as adults from the hazards of their natural environment. Informants repeatedly talked about the elders' warnings against fishing or swimming in the rivers. Although youngsters would stray, most individuals knew that only the neighboring Khoi would be found fishing in the Keiskamma. In 1807, Alberti observed that no Xhosa could be convinced to eat fish because they believed that "fish belong to the family of snakes" (1968:25). Although the Xhosa established their chiefdoms in proximity to the Eastern Cape Rivers, they were strictly pastoral people. Xhosa oral traditions reflect their reluctance to rely on the rivers and risk the health of their people. These traditions encourage individuals to adapt to the subsistence practices of their community. The warnings embedded in the taboos against rivers are woven throughout different types of oral history. In oral traditions such as the story of Tangalimlibo these thematic messages reinforce cultural rules that guide how they cope with their surroundings.

### **The Story of Tangalimlibo**

The story of Tangalimlibo juxtaposes the power of rivers and the importance of cattle. In the tradition, a bird gave pellets to a woman so that she could give birth to a little girl that she named Tangalimlibo (Theal 1882). Since the woman's husband had two wives and preferred to spend all of his time at his other wife's house, he remained ignorant of his daughter's birth. The woman decided to keep Tangalimlibo in the house until her husband returned to see her. Tangalimlibo only ventured out at night.

When Tangalimlibo grew to be a young woman, her father saw her for the first time. In celebration, he told his wife to prepare beer and invite many people to the house.

During the party, a chief's son fell in love with her and the following day requested her hand in marriage. Soon they were married and had a son.

Her husband loved her very much, however, he noticed that she never went outside during the day. He called her *Sihamba Ngenyanga*, the walker by moonlight. One day while he was on a hunting expedition, his father began to question her behavior. As a test, he asked her to bring him water. She reluctantly agreed and took a milk-basket and a calabash ladle to the river. As she dipped the ladle in the water, the water swept it away. She tried using the milk-basket, but the water swept that away too. She then tried to take some water in her mantle. The water grabbed her and drew her under the surface.

After a given period, a girl was sent to look for Tangalimlibo. When she returned claiming that Tangalimlibo was lost, Tangalimlibo's father-in-law drove his oxen to the river. He killed one ox, put its remains in the river, and said, "Let this be instead of my child." A voice hence replied, "Go to my father and my mother and say to them that I am taken by the river."

That evening, when Tangalimlibo's child continually cried, the nurse took him to the river and sang a song. As Tangalimlibo's voice rang back, she ascended from the river, took her child, and nursed him. When she was finished, she told the girl to take her child back to the house and to keep the events at the river a secret. If questioned, she should tell people that she was feeding the baby berries.

Visits to the river continued until Tangalimlibo's husband returned home and discovered that his wife had gone to the river and had never returned home. The baby's nurse brought the child to him, and after some coaxing confessed that she was taking the baby to the river every night to visit his mother.

Tangalimlibo's husband devised a plan to retrieve his wife. He decided to go to the river and hide in the reeds until Tangalimlibo came out of the water. He cut the skin of an ox and tied one end around his waist. He gave the other end to the men of the village and asked them to pull when they felt a tug.

That night, Tangalimlibo's husband hid in the reeds. When Tangalimlibo came out of the water, he grabbed her. Although she tried to pull away, he held her close. The river followed them, and its water turned into blood. When they reached the village, the men became scared and released their hold on the cattle skin. The river once again carried Tangalimlibo away.

When people told her husband about the voice from the river that said "Go to my father and my mother and tell them I am taken by the river," he told his ox to carry the message to Tangalimlibo's parents. The ox bellowed, so he asked his dog to do the task. His dog only barked, so he turned to his rooster. The rooster agreed to deliver the message.

After running into some obstacles, the rooster found Tangalimlibo's parents. Since her mother was a traditional healer, she told her husband to get a fat ox. As she worked with her medicines, they took the ox to the river where Tangalimlibo had disappeared, killed it, and placed the carcass into the water. As the river shook and its levels rose, Tangalimlibo was released from below and returned to her husband.

This oral tradition is significant for a number of reasons. As with the other river traditions, this tradition emphasizes the dangers posed by rivers. It carries the theme of river forces that pull people to their deaths or ill fates. The story also conveys the message that when crises occur in the Xhosa community, people turn to rituals

surrounding cattle to solve them. To appease the ancestors or river forces, an ox is slaughtered as an offering of respect. The oxen symbolize family, fertility rites, and offerings of reverence for indigenous practices.

The collection of river stories is particularly pertinent for understanding the conditions at Fort Willshire during the nineteenth century. They clearly reveal how oral traditions document historical observations, Xhosa ideology, and traditional strategies for dealing with the environment. Xhosa traders risked their lives to cross the dangerous Keiskamma despite their ideological propensities to do otherwise. They defied their own beliefs about the world and their environment in order to reap the benefits of the trade fairs. Trade at Fort Willshire not only changed indigenous economic systems, it affected the core of their worldview.

### **Cattle Symbolize Abundance**

#### **Story of the Wonderful Horns**

Similar insights can be garnered from stories and traditional beliefs regarding cattle. Within the oral traditions of the Xhosa people, there are stories that express the importance and reverence of cattle. The *Story of the Wonderful Horns* symbolically represents the centrality of cattle in Xhosa life and the foundation of their families.

According to George McCall Theal's version of the story (1882), a boy ran away from his father's place after the death of his birth mother. Since his other mothers treated him poorly, he left with the ox that his father gave him.

Soon he came across a bull and a herd of cattle. The boy's ox claimed he could fight and defeat the bull, so the boy dismounted and the fight began. When his ox conquered the bull, they continued on their way. Once the boy began to feel hungry, he

hit the right horn of his ox and food fell out of the horn. After lunch, he hit the left horn and the rest of the food returned to the horn.

They proceeded again until they came across another herd of cattle. The ox predicted that he would fight the herd and die on that spot. He instructed the boy to keep his horns so that he would never be hungry. When the ox died in the fight, the boy broke off his horns and continued to walk to the nearest town.

There he found people cooking the weed, *tyutu*, because they had nothing else to eat. The boy talked to his horn and enough food came out to feed himself and the owner of the house. Satisfied with food, the two fell asleep. As the boy slept, the owner secretly took his horns and replaced them with two other horns.

The next day, the boy left. As he became hungry, he spoke to the horns. This time, the horns failed to provide food. To figure out what went wrong, he returned to the owner's house only to find the owner talking to his horns. Unfortunately for the owner, the horns would only work if the boy talked to them. The boy took the horns back, and went on his way.

During his travels, he came across another house and asked the owner to entertain him. Shocked by the boy's shredded garments and dirty body, he refused and turned the boy away. The boy left that house, only to come across a river. At the river, he sat down on the bank and spoke to his horns. The horns bestowed upon him new clothes and beautiful jewelry. He used these new gifts to dress himself and proceed on his journeys.

Finally, he ran across a house where he discovered a beautiful girl. The girl's father invited him to stay, so he graciously accepted the offer. His horns provided food and clothing for all, and eventually he married the girl. Later, he returned to his father's



place with his new wife. Once he was there, he spoke to the horns, and a wonderful house appeared for him and his new family.

Throughout this story there are references to the necessity of cattle for the survival of the Xhosa people and their families. Cattle are the source of protection, food, property, marriage, and family. They symbolize wealth and prosperity. Their importance in the community is so central to indigenous systems that they are endowed with special powers throughout many oral traditions. They have the power to heal the sick and rescue those that have drowned. Their horns can provide riches for the poor, and their sacrifice, as in the case of the Great Cattle Killing Movement, can save people from colonial intrusion.

Stories about the symbolic importance of cattle horns are pertinent for understanding events at Fort Willshire. Despite the symbolic value of horns, Xhosa traders engaged in a major horn trade. The archaeological record revealed that apart from beads, horns played a central role at the trade fairs. In addition, the characteristics of their discard in the trade fair area indicated that the trade and process of horns occurred on a massive scale (see Chapter 6). If the horns were relinquished in this manner without replacement, Xhosa traders essentially would have had to defy their ideological beliefs and traditional values. For monetary gain, traders would have had to compromise their ideals and understanding of the role of cattle in Xhosa society.

### **Beads, Decorations, and Identity**

Perhaps traders could sacrifice cattle horns during the fairs because they were equating the horns with beads. Archaeological evidence revealed that in areas of horn trade, they attempted to appease the ancestors through bead offerings (discussed in

Chapter 6). Since beads were the symbolic representation of cattle, they took on the ideological meanings and traditional symbolism surrounding cattle. Apart from oral traditions documenting the origins of the Gqunukhwebe and the ideological beliefs about rivers and cattle, oral testimony provided specific details about beads, body adornments, and their roles in defining Xhosa identity.

An interview with the mother of the Great Chief Kama (1998) revealed information about the history of beads, traditional costumes, and body adornments. She remembered the days when the Xhosa practiced *umvambo*, the tradition of scarring their bodies. As she revealed the lines and dots on her body, she claimed that many Xhosa men and women would decorate their chests using different symbols. Once European contact increased and people began wearing more clothes, the practice slowly disappeared. She said that by the early twentieth century, few people recognized the tradition.

In 1807, Ludwig Alberti (1968) described the tradition in more detail. He wrote that "equidistant parallel rows of scars" would decorate the backs, arms, and chests of many Xhosa women. He implied that only women practiced the tradition and that they regarded the practice as a type of adornment of the body. He noted that they created the lines that were two to three different lengths by piercing and lifting the skin with a stylus.

As colonial presence increased in Xhosaland, this practice slowly ceased to exist. Missionaries encouraged people to wear clothes and colonial officials supported the trade of clothes. At Fort Willshire, Xhosa traders had to accept European clothing with every transaction of more valuable goods. Once the trade fairs closed, colonial traders moved

further into the kingdom and established markets making clothing more prevalent in Xhosa communities. As a result, few Xhosa still maintain the scarring tradition.

With increased colonial presence, beads seemed to replace the significance of other body adornments. As the insurgence of beads flowed into Xhosaland, people began to decorate themselves with beaded chest bands, headdresses, skirts, bracelets, and anklets. According to the mother of Chief Kama, her grandparents wore beads that were made differently from her generation. They would decorate the *isidanga*, or traditional blankets, with specific colors. They carried the *isidanga* on their backs during special occasions when they slaughtered an ox or goat, and they wore them to pay respect to the ancestors. She indicated that the blanket was a requirement at these events. If someone did not own a blanket, they were expected to borrow one from their neighbors.

She also said that the colors of beads could identify different chiefdoms. The Fingo Xhosa had different colored beads from those of the Gcaleka Xhosa. She said that the Gqunukhwebe tended to make beaded items in one solid color with mixed colored borders.

Beads of the Gqunukhwebe are not mixed like this. If it's white, it must be all white. Then, they'll mix it at the end (Mother of Chief Kama 1998).

In her own creations, she used many blue beads and white beads, a detail that is corroborated by the large amount of blue and white beads found in excavations around Fort Willshire. Although she implied that she was consistent about the colors, she would organize the beads into many different designs.

Apart from the symbolism behind the color of the beads, the designs made by beads communicated messages between individuals. Beaded patches, or love letters, were made to attract potential love interests. Specific beaded skirts identified young

unmarried women. Elaborate beaded necklaces and headbands decorated more prominent men. According to some informants, men would choose their brides by their bead skills. Special beads also decorated brides. In Zenani's oral tradition, *Marriage in the Early Times*, she describes the beads that decorated her as a young bride.

Another adornment was a necklace of green beads, sometimes called dove beads. These beads were arranged into a pattern which was then rolled into a long coil that had a loop that reached to the thighs when a person knelt. Those beads would be looped around the neck, and the bride would not have a breast cover; she would not wear anything, she would just stand naked in the kraal wearing a little loin cover (Zenani 1992:293).

Through oral traditions, we can see how beads adapted many symbolic meanings within Xhosa society and replaced long established customs. They became an integral part of Xhosa lifeways, defining the identity of individuals as well as chiefdoms. They were essential in ritual contexts, economic realms, and everyday situations. Beads were particularly important in systems of trade and for stimulating culture change for indigenous populations. They became a vehicle in which colonial traders could extract indigenous goods, insert colonial material culture, and change traditional practices.

## Ceramics

Trade in beads stimulated culture change, whereas trade in itself stimulated the end of pottery production. Like the Chief's mother, many informants could describe traditions practiced by their grandparents yet no longer practiced by them. Although local ceramic traditions have long disappeared in the Middledrift District, informants claimed that their grandparents used to make pots for food and *umqombothi*, a traditional drinking beer.

In those days, there was nothing that shone – no buckets or pots, nothing like that. All such vessels were made of clay. Artisans made such vessels. They knew how

to make them very well, these objects were regarded as beautiful (Zenani 1992:276).

While most oral traditions seem to suggest that pottery production among the Xhosa did exist in pre-colonial times, some claim otherwise. According to one elder, although the Gcaleka Xhosa made pots, the Gqunukhwebe Xhosa never practiced the tradition. She remarked: "We never had a belief to clays. We believe on buying." She said that instead of drinking *umqombothi* from clay pots, they used small buckets made of enamel.

Apart from the collections of a few sites, there is little evidence of Late Iron Age ceramics in the Eastern Cape. Although a preliminary ethnoarchaeological investigation in the area surrounding Umtata to the far north of the Eastern Cape revealed modern producers of undecorated pots, most evidence indicates that pottery production ceased to exist for Xhosa on the frontier border. In addition to clothing, traders at Fort Willshire were required to exchange goods for metal wares and utensils if they wanted access to the more valuable items. A likely result of the fairs was the replacement of certain skills and traditions such as indigenous pottery production.

### Conclusion

Oral sources are not only texts about the past, they are artifacts of the past. They are important for their context as well as for an analysis of their degree of perpetuity. While they reveal details and descriptions of past events, they also lend insight about culture apart from the message intended by the informant. The traditions that survive in the historical record reveal the inherent values of Xhosa informants in regard to or regardless of their conscious meanings.

The oral traditions from the Keiskamma River Valley provided details about specific historical events such as the drowning of British soldiers. They offered significant information about ritual sites on the landscape, medicinal and traditional plants, and the spatial layout of homesteads. They identified activity areas on past homesteads and described general cultural trends. Informants revealed meanings associated with everyday material culture and daily routines.

Apart from these details, the oral traditions revealed significant gaps in the record of oral history. Little information commented about the Ngqika Xhosa. Like other artifacts, the presence or absence of stories in the region thus told us something in itself. They revealed insight about migration patterns, resettlement, and cultural values. Since the official keepers of Xhosa history in the region were Gqunukhwebe, they brought with them the Gqunukhwebe Xhosa stories from the east. As the Gqunukhwebe migrated into the region, their traditions accompanied them. The traditions of the Ngqika Xhosa either dissipated or were pushed north and out of the Keiskamma River Valley.

The oral traditions of the Middledrift region contribute to the Fort Willshire project because they provide more contexts for understanding the history of the region. They offer unique information for analyzing the cultural landscape and new directions for constructing interpretations. The Fort Willshire trade fairs resulted in major changes in the region, the products of which are documented in the record of oral history. Through oral traditions, we have access to African voices that comment about changes in ideology, material conditions, and the written record. The African perspective contributes a more comprehensive understanding of how indigenous culture changed on the Eastern Cape frontier.

## CHAPTER 5

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODS: TRADE AND RELATIONS OF CONTACT SEEN IN THE GROUND

In the Eastern Cape, archaeologists use a variety of methods and approaches to understand past colonial and indigenous economies, social interactions, and political strategies. Researching the effects of indigenous confrontations on British settlers, Margot Winer (1994) integrated structural analyses of architectural features and landscape studies, archaeological field excavation, and documentary research. By using different methods, she was able to discover unique patterns in the local material culture. Documenting settlement patterns, R.M. Derricourt (1977) used oral accounts together with archival evidence and archaeological excavation to understand stability, change, and variability amongst people living throughout the Eastern Cape. Like these scholars, I use different methods and types of evidence to understand a changing cultural landscape.

My methods combine oral traditions, archival data, different surveys, and archaeological excavations to gain insight about economic and cultural change. They specifically combine landscape and spatial analysis, trade and economic theory, and statistical tests on various artifact assemblages. To explore questions about trade, specialization, distribution, and the division of local activities at the Fort Willshire trade fairs, certain methods were needed to interpret the archaeological record. Oral testimony guided my understanding of the environment, indicated specific areas to test, and played a central role in my decision to use other methods. Different survey techniques were used to gain further understanding of the vegetation and to uncover specific artifacts

related to trade or to the everyday activities of the traders themselves. To discern evidence related to different cultural activities, I chose methods that would help me uncover artifacts associated with specific functions or items such as trade goods.

The trade goods exchanged at Fort Willshire provide a glimpse of trade events and reveal why two different societies were economically drawn together. The materials made available at these fairs were media of interaction. The types of artifacts collected, their individual characteristics such as color, size, amount, and pattern, and how these specific types were discarded across the landscape tell us which goods lured the British and the Xhosa to the fairs. The distribution of the items reveals: 1) locations where people carried out transactions, 2) other activities apart from trading, 3) any illicit trade, and 4) to what extent people coexisted in the same region by living off of indigenous resources or imported colonial goods. The context and pattern in which goods were discarded provide these otherwise missing historical details of everyday economic activities.

In this chapter, I outline the methods used to gather information before archaeological sub-surface testing and the excavation techniques and strategies employed to discover activity areas. I also describe the methodological approaches used to analyze the archaeological evidence across the landscape. While these methods were designed around specific research questions, they also varied depending on the variations in the natural environment (see Chapter 3).

This chapter is organized in two parts. The first presents work done on the Fort Willshire side of the Keiskamma River, an area belonging to the Double Drift Game Reserve. The second section reviews the work conducted on the Xhosa side of the river.



This area is comprised of communal land belonging to the state but managed by local Xhosa living in communal settlements. The Keiskamma River divides a landscape characterized by different land management strategies. Consequently, different vegetation characteristics impact various degrees of visibility of cultural sites. In addition, land boundaries continuously fluctuated throughout the contact period and different people moved in and out of the area. At different times, various Xhosa chiefdoms and a few Khoi occupied the region. The British military, colonial settlers, missionaries, farmers, and game reserve officials also migrated into the area and claimed land. Considering the vast differences in the natural environment of the Keiskamma River Valley and the various cultural groups represented, I used a flexible methodology to gather archaeological evidence.

### **Archaeological Methods**

Research methods aimed at uncovering evidence about the ways in which indigenous people, colonial traders, and British soldiers dispersed themselves across the landscape. My archaeological study consisted of four stages: 1) reconnaissance involving documentary and archival research and in-depth interviews with elders within four villages, 2) a variety of landscape surveys, 3) shovel test pit surveys in selected areas, and 4) test excavations. These methods were designed to highlight how people divided the region, adapted to their changing environment, and interacted in their particular frontier setting.

#### **Reconnaissance**

I conducted a series of preliminary reconnaissance activities to identify the number, location, and characteristics of archaeological remains that would elucidate

definitive sites within the region. I examined archival materials, old photographs, aerial photographs, and maps. I obtained permission from local Xhosa chiefs and elders to conduct interviews and carry out archaeological research on their land. I also held meetings with officials from the Double Drift Game Reserve to present my project, conduct on-site tours to show officials characteristics of the study area, and obtain permission to work on the reserve. During these meetings, cultural facilitators and an environmental consultant were assigned to help me with my research. They offered to introduce me to surrounding Xhosa villages, act as my translators, and inform me of cultural events such as beast slaughtering ceremonies.<sup>1</sup> They answered questions about the surrounding vegetation and offered their own accounts of the local history.

I also interviewed various people such as amateur historians, other Xhosa locals, and different South African scholars. Many European descendants in Grahamstown have taken special interests in the local history of the region. Some have family records dating to the period of the 1820 British settlers. Xhosa locals often pass down traditional stories about the past. Sometimes, these oral accounts vary from those told by elders. A few South African scholars introduced me to people who collected different types of historical records or were considered the keepers of oral traditions (see Chapter 4). I took elders and other informants on surveys of the landscape in order to trigger memories, view areas where their ancestors lived, and find specific areas that held personal, historical, or cultural significance. Informants seemed relatively confident when they identified past activity areas. They took us directly to sites.

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<sup>1</sup> Beast slaughtering ceremonies are traditional Xhosa rituals conducted to appease the ancestors. They are held for funerals, to remember the dead, to prevent bad omens, or during family celebrations.

With archival data, the knowledge of local informants, and information from aerial surveys conducted from a helicopter, I was able to design a probabilistic survey strategy. I concentrated on areas that had a high probability of past cultural activity. In these regions, I revisited areas previously identified by informants, from the helicopter, or from aerial photographs produced by the office of the Chief Directorate: Surveys and Land Information. While I conducted a pedestrian survey in all locations surrounding Fort Willshire, I focused most of the time in areas near river crossings or in immediate proximity to the fort. Based on the results of these surveys, which I discuss in more detail below, I chose areas that had a high probability of archaeological deposits. In these areas, I conducted metal detector surveys and preliminary shovel tests. Everyday and at every stage, I repeatedly walked over the area surrounding our daily archaeological excavations. Before and during subsurface testing, I continually integrated these noninvasive and nondestructive means of discovering human activities from the past. Above the ground, I integrated archival information and oral accounts to record cultural areas and differences in vegetation.

### **Insights About the Natural and Cultural Landscape**

After reading the historical literature, analyzing the oral traditions, and assessing the natural environment, it was apparent that parts of the landscape represented specific cultural identities, held different symbolic meanings, and revealed clearly defined activity areas. Certain exotic plants such as prickly pears and jointed cactus often decorated areas of past farm houses (Klaas 1998, personal interview). The Xhosa used grasslands close to the Keiskamma River as grazing areas for cattle. Xhosa elders identified homesteads belonging to their ancestors, and other areas that held ritual significance.

Some areas were called “Khoi or colored areas”. Informants from Ngcabasa showed me two different homesteads, which they claimed belonged to “Hottentots”. The first area held remnants of a house belonging to an *Iqheya* or *Ilawu*. When I asked them what this meant, they said that *Iqheya* or *Ilawu* means “Hottentot”. The mud brick foundation that represented this house was located on the northwest side of the footpath in Ntilini yaseNgcabasa. The remains of the hut included mud walls that were approximately 40 cm to 50 cm in height. The outline of the foundation indicated that the structure was square and had two rooms. Growing in and around the house, we found *lycium* species, which is a stiffly branched thorny shrub or small tree that grows to about 2 to 3 meters (Goldblatt and Manning 2000:673). It seemed common to find *lycium* species growing near most of the old house foundations. Since the chairman of Ngcabasa knew the man who lived in this house, he knew the approximate date of occupation. He estimated the date to be around 1950.

The second Khoi homestead was also located in Ntilini yaseNgcabasa. It was 0.24 kilometers from the first Khoi location and 1.83 kilometers from Fort Willshire. It consisted of remnants of a four-corner house, a kraal area, and a type of mound. It also included a *rondavel*, which is a cylinder structure with a conical roof and wattle and daub construction. Since the structures were slightly obscured by overgrown vegetation, informants identified these areas for me. The four-corner house was made of stone and the *rondavel* foundation consisted of mud walls.

In comparison to the Xhosa, the Khoi built their settlements closer to the river's edge. While the Khoi fished, the Xhosa relied on cattle and the resources of the land. Oral traditions note Xhosa reverence of rivers and the river people (see Chapter 3). By

identifying Xhosa places and analyzing their proximity to the river, the mountains, and the trade fair area, I hoped to obtain an idea about the extent and impact of the fairs on settlement patterns.

### **Surface Surveys**

I spent approximately five months conducting a regional survey to assess land use, settlement patterns, and environmental variations. As much information as possible was collected from the surface before proceeding with subsurface shovel testing. The first stages of survey were devoted to locating possible crossings over the Keiskamma River, assessing high priority areas of possible Xhosa settlement, and defining natural land boundaries and surface features.

To meet these goals, I worked with a Garmin GPS 12XL and used a 1:50,000 map and aerial photograph. I employed various survey techniques including helicopter surveys, metal detector surveys, and different sampling strategies. This section discusses the details of these approaches, outlines my observations, and highlights the information used to identify potential areas for excavation.

Aerial photographs and a pedestrian survey over the land helped us identify patterns in the vegetation, locate clusters of artifacts on the surface, and discover cultural remnants and building foundations within the study area. Aerial photographs and metal detectors also revealed potential areas of stratified cultural deposits.

Once I gained a general understanding about the area based on aerial photographs, preliminary surveys, metal detector surveys, and the knowledge of informants, I conducted more controlled surface collections and systematic shovel test pits in high

priority areas. These in turn were assessed in order to determine areas for more extensive excavations.

### Helicopter Survey

Officials of the Double Drift Game Reserve hired the helicopter team to conduct game counts before hunting season. They gave me fifteen minutes of free flight time to take aerial photographs of my study area. The driver flew in four transects which paralleled the river, two on each side of the river. Next, he circled in certain areas where I identified sites or which had a high probability of sites based on archival evidence or oral testimony. From approximately 30 meters above ground, I took a series of photographs of the landscape. I used a Cannon EOS camera with a 35 mm lens. For every picture taken with the 35 mm lens, I used the zoom function to take a close up picture at 135 mm.

After having each roll of film developed in Grahamstown, I meticulously reviewed each picture for contrasts in the environment. I identified color differences in the vegetation, irregular patterns of plants and bare grassy patches, low hills and irregular surfaces, and clusters of shrubs such as *lycium* species and euphorbia trees. Next, I noted their location, visited these areas, and searched for identifiable surface features.



Figure 5.1 Aerial Photo of Fort Willshire Ruins

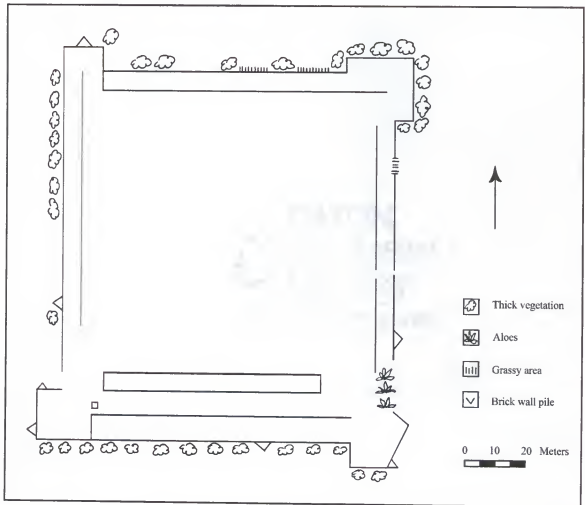


Figure 5.2 Fort Willshire Map

In addition, I noted differences in areas according to present indigenous or exotic vegetation. Thembekile Klaas (personal interview 1998), the Environmental Expert at the Double Drift Game Reserve, informed me that indigenous species include various aloes, sweet thorn, euphorbia trees, cross berry bushes, buffalo thorn, and sneeze wood. He also identified a plant that he called *Coddis rudis*, or small bone apple, as an indigenous species. The exotics include prickly pears and jointed cactus plants. Klaas indicated that these plants were often found at old farmhouses.



Figure 5.3 Thorny Acacia Throughout Study Area

Since the introduction of exotic species often corresponded with a colonial presence in the area, we used these plants as an indicator of cultural contact. Observations from the helicopter helped find these plants and thus determine potential areas for subsurface tests. Once we identified sites from the air, we visited each area with game reserve officials.



### Environmental Survey with Game Rangers

Since game rangers conducted their own research in the area and had personal knowledge of Xhosa culture, they could provide unique expertise about the environment. During surveys, they often answered any of my questions about environmental characteristics and discoveries on the landscape. They also knew boundaries of communal lands and farmland. They took us directly to past homesteads, fields, and areas of cultural significance. Thembekile Klaas directed our attention to plants endowed with indigenous medicinal importance, ritual meanings, and everyday significance. Other informants showed us particular areas where they found indigenous ceramic sherds. Game reserve officials often found artifacts and other cultural markers during their daily game checks in the reserve.

With their help and my assessment of preliminary findings, I defined my study area as the boundaries of the Double Drift Game Reserve, the Keiskamma River, and the land belonging to three Xhosa Locations: Ngcabasa, Ngqolowa, and Dikidikana (see figure 1.2). Using the Keiskamma River as a natural boundary, I organized my research survey design into two sub-regional areas, the fort side and the Xhosa side of the river.

### **Survey on the Fort Side**

In the Double Drift Game Reserve, I designed surveys around the ruins of the Fort Willshire Keiskamma Barracks. I established our primary datum at the east entrance to the fort, on the north side (500N, 500E). In three days, we initially covered 5625 square kilometers consisting of the south, north, and east sides of the fort. We covered each

survey zone in transects placed every 10 meters. This distance varied depending on the density of the vegetation.<sup>2</sup>

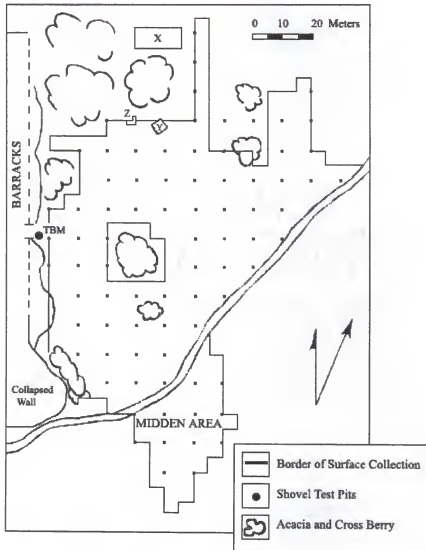


Figure 5.4 Map of Fort Willshire Trade Fair Area  
Location of Surface Collection and Shovel Test Pits

<sup>2</sup> In areas of thick vegetation, we adjusted the distance between transects. If the vegetation consisted of thorny acacias, we bypassed the area and increased transects to 20 meters or more. Within the areas of dense euphorbia trees, we decreased transects to 10 meters or less.

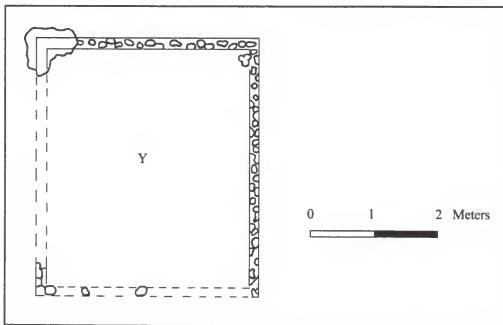
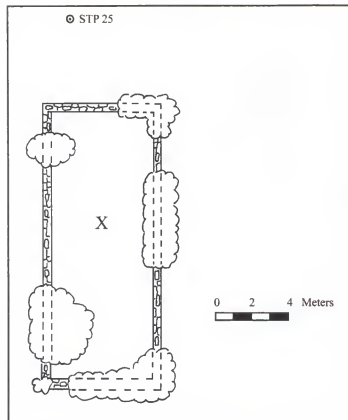


Figure 5.5 Brick Foundations X and Y Found in Fair Grounds Area.

From this survey, we discovered a graveyard, various brick foundations, surface scatters, and irrigation pipes belonging to later farm settlements. We also found slight terracing, small mounds on the landscape, and grassy fields that abruptly met dense areas of thorny acacias (figure 5.3). These areas represented possible signs of past agricultural activity. On the north side, we discovered surface scatters representing a midden that possibly spanned the entire north side of the fort.

Since the east side of the fort extended into a large flat bend in the river, we divided the area into two sections based on an old wagon road that ran through the middle. We discovered features in this area similar to those found on the other sides of the fort. Apart from random brick piles associated with clusters of ceramics, glass, metal and bone, we located a series of clearly defined brick and rock foundations that we labeled A through L. Site M was a large rock pile associated with scatters of bone and glass. Site N provided evidence of an ash midden defined by pieces of brick, bone, glass, and ceramics. Site O seemed to mark remnants of water works and Site P seemed to represent past terracing. Apart from these sites, we located brick foundations within the trade fair area, Sites X and Y.

While Sites X and Y most likely shared similar functions, Sites A through N seemed to be associated with each other. Laid out in rectangular squares, the remnants of brick walls represented possible outlook posts or small structures spaced approximately 10 meters apart (see figure 5.6 to 5.10).<sup>3</sup> The written record indicates that there were structures surrounding the fort in an L shape spatial pattern. Although Randles (1976)

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<sup>3</sup> These brick walls were often associated with clusters of artifacts (figure 5.8), including 19<sup>th</sup> century glass, whiteware ceramic sherds, and colonial pipe stems (see Chapter 6 for a detailed analysis of the archaeological data).

suggests that these brick foundations might be associated with the British occupation of the fort apart from the trade fairs, Beck (1983) suggests that at least one of the buildings was a gate or blockhouse used to check the trade permits of African traders.

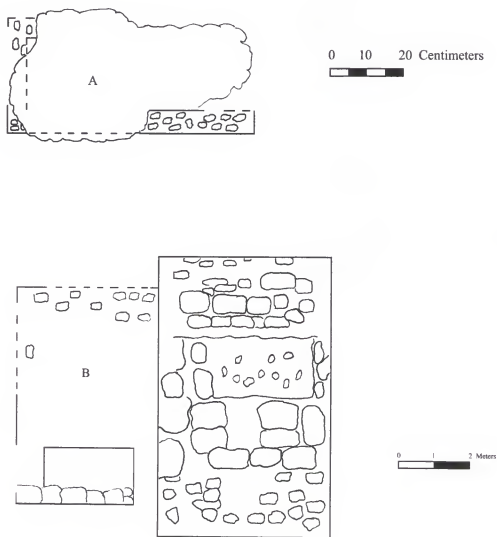


Figure 5.6 Brick Foundations A and B Found Outside Fort Willshire

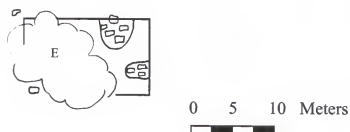
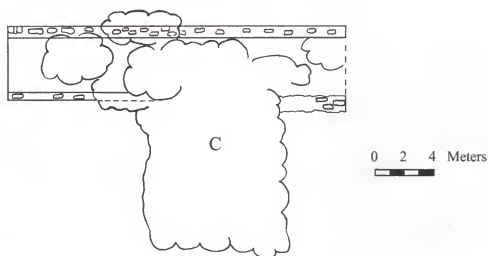


Figure 5.7 Brick Foundations C, D, and E Found Outside Fort Willshire

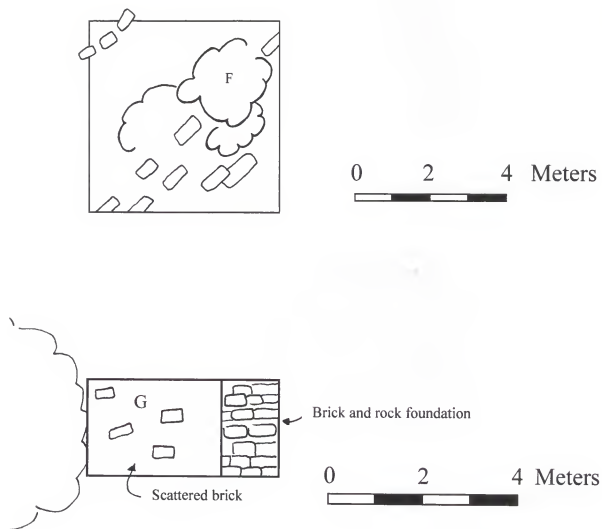


Figure 5.8 Brick Foundations F and G Found Outside Fort Willshire

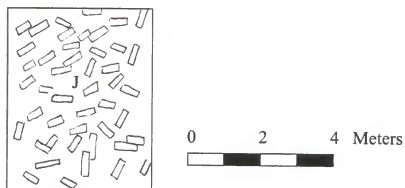
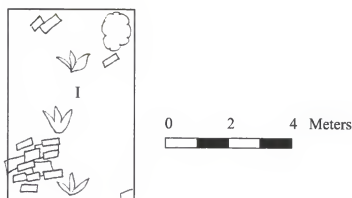
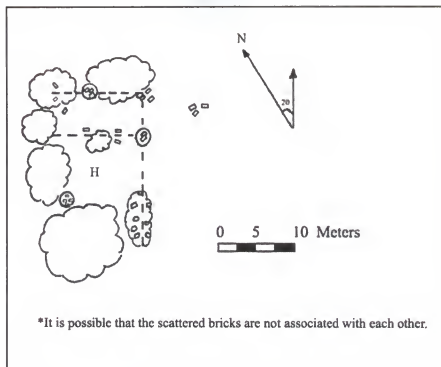


Figure 5.9 Brick foundations or scatters H, I, and J Found Outside of Fort Willshire



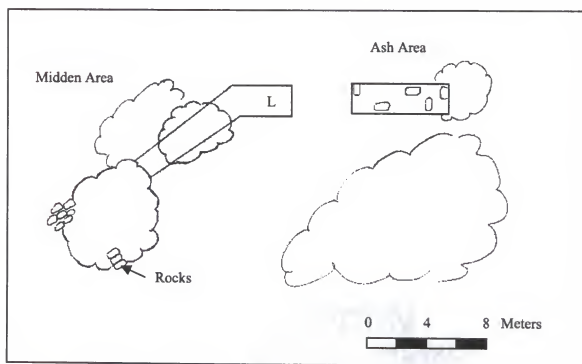
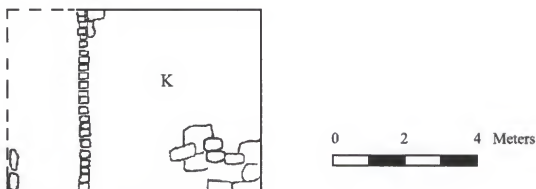


Figure 5.10 Brick and Rock Foundations K and L Found Outside Fort Willshire

Throughout the west section, we found various surface scatters consisting of ceramics, glass, metal, and faunal material. We also found possible *isivivane* [*isivivane* are stone piles created by the Xhosa in order to pay tribute to the ancestors] (figure 5.11).



Figure 5.11 Zuki Jakavula standing next to possible *isivivane*

Modern ruins, most likely representing twentieth century farmhouses, were discovered close to the house of the Double Drift rangers. We also located and mapped two possible crossings over the Keiskamma River. We took careful note of exposed faunal remains on the surface in order to distinguish those related to the game reserve and those associated with nineteenth century historical activities (as determined by associated cultural remains). We also noted differences in the vegetation, such as dense clusters of thorny acacias surrounded by large grassy plains. Based on the information of local informants, we noticed that these particular patterns sometimes indicate past settlements.

Once we gained a better understanding of the study area, we focused on a smaller section on the east periphery of the fort. This area seemed to have the majority of cultural activity areas. After assessing the written record and historical photographs, I concluded this area was the site of many Fort Willshire Trade Fair activities. Within approximately 16,500 square meters, we laid out a grid that was marked every 5 meters (see figure 5.4). I wanted to distinguish areas associated with trade fair activities, life of the traders apart from the trade fairs, and activities associated with the British fort itself. The borders of this grid were based on the wall of the fort, the old wagon road, a dense cluster of thorny acacias and euphorbia trees, and preliminary pedestrian surveys. From a temporary benchmark placed next to the brick wall of the fort entrance, we laid out the grid. We used tapes, a compass, and triangulation principles. As we marked off 5 meters x 5 meters squares, my assistants began surface collections within each unit.

To maintain a tightly controlled collection, surface findings in each square were bagged separately. Over the entire area, we found various ceramics, faunal remains, glass, brick, a few buttons, and a large amount of seed beads (see Chapter 6).<sup>4</sup> These artifacts were counted and plotted on distribution maps. To quickly identify artifact clusters, I plotted all artifacts regardless of type. I was able to see activity areas right away, and prioritize areas for excavation.

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<sup>4</sup> Seed beads, or pound beads, are small monochrome glass beads (Kaufmann 1994, Saitowitz 1988, Beck 1987, Shaw & Van Warmelo 1986). Europeans used the drawn method to produce them. Hollow tubes were produced by drawing out a lump of molten glass. These tubes were then chopped and rounded by "tumbling" (Karklins 1985:88, Saitowitz 1991, Kaufmann 1994:53).

### Excavation on the Fort Side

To further refine a strategy for test excavations, I conducted a systematic shovel test survey in the fair ground and parked wagon areas.<sup>5</sup> My crew and I placed 40 centimeters x 40 centimeters square test pits every 10 meters along the survey grid. Each pit was dug until we hit sterile soil. In some tests we hit bedrock after 5 centimeters to 10 centimeters, while in others we dug as deep as 1 meter.

Artifacts from these tests, consisting mainly of beads, were counted and then used to create distribution maps. These results were then compared to the distribution maps of surface finds. With this information, I defined areas of high priority for more extensive excavation.

Four places within the trade fair grounds and the wagon area indicated significant deposits. I initially focused my work on two of these, which I designated as high priority. In these areas, we discovered fragile faunal remains during the shovel test pit survey.

I considered these faunal remains as possible indicators of cultural activity, including trade as well as subsistence behavior. This material had the potential to reveal the diets of traders, the types of animals or meat being exchanged, and the chosen animal parts. The collection allowed me to determine whether or not people were depending on local wild game or domestic stock.

In the trade fair grounds, we also discovered a concentrated layer of cattle horn cores, a few long bones belonging to cattle as well, and approximately 3,000 associated seed beads. Since the Xhosa had a cattle based economy and the written record indicates that beads eventually came to symbolize the importance of cattle, I considered this area

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<sup>5</sup> I based my assumption that these areas were the fair ground and wagon areas on historical sketches of the trade fair, descriptions in the historical record, and the field notes of the historian Roger Beck (1987).

indicative of an indigenous presence at the fairs, trade activity, or changes related to indigenous economy. I decided to excavate in this area because of the potential significance of this feature. Once the first 1 meter x 1 meter unit was completed, we opened up three more 1 meter x 1 meter units to determine the extent of this feature. With four units opened, we could see the borders of the feature and extrapolate the edges through the covered sections. The layer of horn cores and seed beads seemed to extend over an area of 4 meters x 3 meters.

One hundred meters north of the cattle horn cores, we opened up two 1 meter x 1 meter units in an area that had a high density of surface artifacts and a high percentage of artifacts recovered from earlier shovel test pits. A historical sketch of the fairs indicated that traders parked their wagons in this area. Each test excavation in this area revealed a series of ash layers with a variety of interspersed artifacts (see Chapter 6). We found European manufactured ceramics, glass, metal, and faunal remains. In the ash layers, most of the artifacts were highly fragmented (see Chapters 6 and 7). We found very small fragments of a wide range of ceramic sherds and only choice cuts of faunal material. This refuse pattern seems consistent with transient settlements described by other archaeologists. Elizabeth J. Reitz and Elizabeth S. Wing (1999) note:

A processing or mealtime camp occupied only briefly will probably produce smaller deposits containing a limited array of animal remains (253).

After comparing the historical sketches with the spatial patterning of the artifact assemblages, I pieced together the wagon area, surrounding hearths, particular discarded cuts of meat, and remnants of broken plates and bowls that would occasionally break but nevertheless remain functional. Being close to the trade fair area (see figure 3.1), the parked wagon area provided European traders many conveniences. The area provided

ease for transporting goods and for overlooking the actions of the Xhosa traders coming from the north. Perhaps colonial traders interacted with indigenous traders at the parked wagon area itself.

The third tested area supports this interpretation. This section is most likely part of the parked wagon area, although it is located 150 meters southwest of the first excavation tests. On the surface, we found indigenous unglazed coarse earthenware of local manufacture. To determine if these artifacts also indicated trade goods, we opened one 1 meter x 1 meter test unit. This unit was defined by a series of overlapping ash layers (see Chapter 6).

Although we found a variety of European manufactured remains throughout the unit, we found few indigenous unglazed coarse earthenware sherds below the surface (see Chapter 6). Considering the ash layers and the preponderance of colonial materials, I considered this pit similar to the ones opened in the second area of excavation. Given time restrictions and lack of indigenous markers below the surface, I completed excavations on the fort side in order to focus on lab analysis (see Chapters 6 and 7).

### **Survey on the Xhosa Side**

After analyzing the written record, I decided to conduct my preliminary survey in the Middelburg district, focusing on the Ngcabasa Location, Dikidikana Location, and Nqolowa Location. I chose these locations because they are adjacent to the Keiskamma River and in close proximity to the Fort Willshire ruins. These areas are defined by old farm boundaries and consist of approximately 150 contemporary houses (figure 5.12), communal grazing lands, and environments classified as Eastern Province thornveld

(Acocks 1988:28).<sup>6</sup> Although most houses in the communities are square and made of wattle and daub or mud bricks, occasionally *rondavels* or round houses decorate the landscape. Each homestead has approximately three houses (see Chapter 4 for a description of the homesteads), and a central kraal or fenced enclosure. The kraal is made of thorny shrubs and is orientated so that it faces the entrance of the main house. In these locations, the homesteads are clustered in villages and close to the upper ridges of the valley. The rest of the area consists of grazing lands and areas that are currently unoccupied by settlements.

Informants told me that people such as their grandparents used to live in the valleys until they moved to their current location in the mid-1900s. They moved to the ridges of the valley to be nearer to schools, roads, and routes to nearby towns. Since older homesteads were located in the valleys, I surveyed these areas. I divided each Xhosa Location into survey units that could be surveyed within a day. These survey units were further divided into transects, which I discuss later.

Before conducting research in these Xhosa locations, we attended a series of community meetings to obtain formal permission from the chairman and local elders of each area (see Chapter 7). Once permission was granted, elders and guides escorted us on a tour of each location. They pointed out significant historical and cultural areas, places where their families had previously settled, and fields designated for agriculture and grazing.

Our first visit was to Ngcabasa (figure 5.12). Mr. Thembekile Klaas, the Environmental Specialist and Cultural Facilitator for the Double Drift Game Reserve,

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<sup>6</sup> The term "thornveld" refers to savannas that are dominated by thorny trees or shrubs, particularly *Acacia* species (Cowling et al. 1997: 594).

accompanied us, acted as our translator, and gave my research the formal legitimacy needed for introduction into Xhosa society. Once we arrived in Ngcabasa, Chairman Dlamkile greeted us warmly at his house. After listening to my presentation and asking me a series of questions, he granted his permission. Although he allowed us to begin surveying that day, he requested our presence at the next community meeting.



Figure 5.13 Chairman Dlamkile of Ngcabasa and his wife



Figure 5.12 Ngcabasa Location

For reasons of safety and recognition within Ngcabasa, I presented the project to the residents living in the location.<sup>1</sup>

Subsequently, Chairman Dlamkile told his younger brother to give us an on-site field tour. Over a period of two days, we were taken into Nqgakayi and Ntlini

<sup>1</sup> We were invited back to Ngcabasa on 9 December 1998 so that I could present my project to the community at a meeting held at the chairman's house.



yaseNgcabasa, which is located 150 meters southeast of Fort Willshire directly across the Keiskamma River. This is where I began my pedestrian survey. I divided this area into six strata and labeled them in order of priority and in the order that they were surveyed. Strata 1,3 and 4 were designated high priority zones. The area of each equaled 1700 square kilometers. Due to time constraints, strata 2 and 5 were slightly bigger. The area of highest priority was stratum 1 because it was adjacent to the main river crossing and the banks of the Keiskamma River. In addition, the gradual slope of the area provided flat areas that would have had great potential for settlement. In each strata, we surveyed transects that were approximately 50 meters wide and we started at the highest elevation.

In all of these zones, natural mounds appear in some areas, yet seldom are artifacts seen on the surface in comparison to the fort side. During the survey with Chairman Dlamkile's brother, I documented the ruins representing the homestead of the chairman's grandparents. They were one of the last people to move from this area in 1940. My informant said that people lived in the area from 1900-1950. The chairman's brother also showed us the old maize fields and the area occupied by only Khoi families (north of Ntilini and the barracks).

Northwest of the Ntilini yaseNgcabasa footpath, I recorded GPS readings of an area possibly occupied by a Khoi family.<sup>8</sup> The remains of a foundation indicated the presence of a square house. It included two possible rooms and had mud walls approximately 40 cm to 50 cm in height. It was also identified by the presence of *lycium*

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<sup>8</sup> Some times the informant referred to this family as "coloured" and other times he claimed they were "Hottentots". He did make it clear that they were not Xhosa. The Xhosa word for "Hottentot", "coloured", or Khoi is Iqheya/Ilawu.

species,<sup>9</sup> which grew along the inside perimeter of the house. As noted previously, *lycium* species are often found near old house ruins, and as such they are probably a good indicator of obscured cultural features.

We visited another possible Khoi homestead approximately 0.24 kilometers southwest of the first Khoi homestead and 1.83 kilometers northeast of Fort Willshire. This one included a four-corner house and a *rondavel*. From the surface, I could only detect mounds and a grassy field (a distinct difference from the surrounding vegetation). My informant claimed that the structures were made of stones and were occupied during the same time period. He was able to give us a detailed description of the spatial layout of this homestead. The kraal was located northwest of the house. In the southeast area of the homestead, there was a mound that indicated yet another structure. The informant said that there were three houses on this homestead, which would be characteristic of a typical Xhosa settlement (see Frescura 1981, Derricourt 1974). In the area identified as belonging to the third house, we found a flat undecorated rim sherd. It was a wheel thrown, red coarse earthenware with black paste. No other artifacts were found at this homestead or at the other Khoi homestead.

The visible differences on the landscape seem to support the informant's information about the layout of the homestead (see Chapter 3 for more information about the environment). The area was characterized by distinctive yellow grass patches, which were possible indicators of past structures. Mr. Klaas informed us that the yellow coloration was a result of poor soils, in comparison to the greener grasses resulting from cattle dung. Although no one confirmed Klaas' claim, we considered it reliable

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<sup>9</sup> Identified by Mr. Thembekile Klaas.

information since he was employed at the Double Drift Game Reserve for his environmental expertise.

Although we noted similar yellow grass patches across the landscape, we found very few associated artifact scatters. Due to time and financial constraints, further tests were postponed in these areas. I focused instead on areas that revealed environmental differences as well as surface remains.

From the surveys of the Xhosa sections within my study area, I gained important insights. The Khoi sections seemed to be geographically separate from the Xhosa areas, an observation supported by local informants. This division of the land into Khoi, Xhosa, and British sections also extended and changed throughout different time periods. A multi-scalar and multi-temporal framework helped me deal with this complexity. Our main tasks were to identify cultural areas associated with specific social identities as well as sort out the differences on the landscape due to changes throughout time.

In summary, our first step was to visit particular areas with informants. Next, I divided the area into strata and surveyed each within transects. These pedestrian surveys helped me identify high priority areas. Within these smaller sections, we conducted metal detector surveys and shovel test pit surveys, which are discussed below.

Surveys helped us distinguish between nineteenth century and twentieth century sites. We identified sites, which were undiagnostic without some kind of subsurface testing, and we noted sites that had indigenous cultural significance. Assessing this information, I decided to proceed with excavations in areas that revealed nineteenth century surface remains, changes in the vegetation, and indicators of an indigenous presence (e.g. locally manufactured artifacts, patterns in the vegetation, and forged metal

fragments).<sup>10</sup>

### Excavation on the Xhosa side

On the Xhosa side of the Keiskamma River, I limited excavations to the Ntilini yaseNgcabasa area. This area is closest to the Fort Willshire ruins and consists of a flat grassy area defined by a bend in the river. It is also connected to the major foot crossing. For these reasons it appeared to have greater potential for cultural activity than other locations. In some written accounts, people at the fort described being able to see Xhosa traders on the other side of the river. Out of the three possible crossing areas, the windmill crossing was the only one visible from the immediate area surrounding the fort.<sup>11</sup> For this reason, I focused on this area. Excavations were designed to distinguish activity areas of the nineteenth century, determine the relationship between surface scatters and artifact bearing stratified deposits, and discover sites that elucidated a more detailed picture of the cultural and economic history of the Keiskamma River Valley.<sup>12</sup>

The first area that I chose was a small grassy plain that we named Ngcabasa 3226DD-1. I selected this area because it had patches of dark green grass, it was close to the river, and it was located directly at the end of the footpath in Ntilini yaseNgcabasa. It covered an area 60 meters x 60 meters. After surveying this area in 5 meter transects, we conducted a metal detector survey.

<sup>10</sup> Findings further discussed in Chapter 6.

<sup>11</sup> The crossing was named after its proximity to the windmill.

<sup>12</sup> Based on surface scatters, information from aerial photographs, metal detector surveys, and changes in the vegetation, I decided to dig in four areas. Except for the first area, in the field we gave each site a Xhosa name beginning with each letter of the alphabet: Andile, Buliswa, Cikizwa, and Dumezweni. The first area we named S22 because we began our survey in that area on March 22. Although I used these names in the field for the ease of remembering them, I assigned a name to each relating to the particular location for conventional purposes. Ngcabasa 3226DD-1 represents S22. Ngcabasa 3226DD-2 represents Andile (A). Ngcabasa 3226DD-3 represents Buliswa and so on. These conventional names are composed of the location's local name, the number designated to the corresponding 1:50,000 map, and a number

Dalinyebo D. Bout and Mbuyiselo Ndamane, officers from the South African Police Department conducted the metal detector surveys. In this area, they moved along five meter transects and found four points that were sensitive to the metal detector. The first point was marked by the start of their survey, the second was a slight mound, and the third was a yellow grass patch located near the end of the footpath. The last point was marked in a green grassy area that was greener than its surroundings. When the metal detector signaled the discovery of significant spots, we flagged these areas for further excavation.

Apart from digging shovel test pits every 20 meters on two 40 meter transects, we also tested the three areas marked by the metal detector. In areas that were sensitive to the metal detector, we found one lead shot (caliber = 18 mm) and one iron bolt/key hole fixture. Both were found in the top 5 centimeters of the test pits. The other shovel test pits revealed flora, fauna, modern metal, and white clay. We found few cultural materials in the top 10 centimeters of our tests and no cultural material below this level. The metal detector was successful in indicating the few cultural remains found in test pits and the absence of artifacts in sterile areas. For these reasons, I moved to the second area, Ngcabasa 3226DD-2.

Site 2 seemed to support an early twentieth century occupation. Our 1 meter x 1 meter test excavation yielded approximately forty seed beads, charcoal, leather, porcelain, hand painted whiteware, metal, and glass (see Chapter 6). We found flora, including the seeds and burnt wood that were collected for future analysis by botanical specialists. We also discovered small miscellaneous bone fragments.

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representing the order that the site was recorded and investigated. This method is the standard used by the Albany Museum in South Africa.

Apart from this evidence, Ngcabasa 3226DD-2 offered insight into various mounds that occupy this area. Since we suspected the mounds were decomposed hut floors, we excavated a small section of one with the guidance of Alex Schoeman.<sup>13</sup> Towards the edge of the circular mound, we opened up a 1 meter x 1 meter test unit. Ideally, to avoid uncovering a collapsed wall or the center of the structure, tests should be placed in areas that might reveal the entrance of the hut. Hut floors are easier to identify in the archaeological record when huts were burnt down. The burning produces a hard baked floor in comparison to the rest of the surrounding soil. In this case, we reached a collapsed wall instead of a baked floor and Schoeman suspected that the hut simply collapsed over time.

This excavation assisted with the interpretation of other mounds, but since surrounding artifacts in the area correlated more with the twentieth century, I limited excavations. Guided by questions about the nineteenth century, we moved onto the third site Ngcabasa 3226DD-3.

This site also showed twentieth century characteristics. A 1 meter x 1 meter pit revealed an extensive ash midden. We collected a number of glass seed beads, faunal remains, hand painted whiteware, porcelain, metal, and charcoal (see Chapter 6). Although the shape of the beads were more irregular than those found at site 2 (a characteristic that might be indicative of an earlier time period), the color of the beads still pointed to an early twentieth century site. Since the hand painted white-bodied wares also seemed to support a later time period, I moved to excavations at Ngcabasa 3226DD-4.

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<sup>13</sup> Alex Schoeman was the Historical Anthropologist at the Albany Museum. She has worked on many Iron Age sites and is currently working on her Ph.D. at the University of Witwatersrand.

Although the evidence at site 4 represented the nineteenth century, all of it was found on the surface or within the top 5 to 20 centimeters. I constructed a 1 meter x 1 meter grid in an area 14 meters x 16 meters. On the surface, we found mainly nineteenth century wine bottle fragments. Although little else was found, I suspected this area was culturally significant beyond being a temporary drinking spot. The area was slightly elevated and similar in shape to a mound. We dug diagonally across the mound, opening up four 1 meter x 1 meter units. The soil was very soft and fine. In the top 20 centimeters, we found bits of shell, bone, wood, metal, and floral materials. In the top 3 centimeters, we found an iron knife fragment. Despite this small artifact assemblage, the area seemed to represent a possible Xhosa homestead. Cecil Nonquane, a Xhosa and a colleague from the Albany Museum, visited the site and supported my interpretation.

The only site where we found a significant assemblage of artifacts was Ngcabasa 3226DD-5 (see Chapter 6). On the surface of this area, we found nineteenth and twentieth century ceramics, faunal, and glass. We also found a significant amount of iron slag. The pieces were small and seemed to indicate a forging process rather than a smelting process. Most of the finds were found on the surface. Since we found this site towards the end of our field season, we postponed further testing for later. We ended work in the area by mapping the site and collecting the surface finds.

### **Conclusion**

Drawing from the methods described above as well as other sources of historical data (e.g. oral traditions and written records), I gained insights into the ways in which indigenous people interacted both economically and socially with Europeans. Fort Willshire is a model for understanding how trade goods radiate from a central location in

order to influence not only an indigenous community but also a colonial power that is connected to other parts of the world.

Working with a small crew, limited time, and financial constraints, I had to combine methods that would help me organize a large region in ways that would lead to the most pertinent evidence of contact, trade, and nineteenth century events. I had to cover a large area in a small amount of time and choose areas that would yield the most significant archaeological information. This meant working closely with locals, continuously drawing information from different sources, and prioritizing areas at every stage of my fieldwork.

Methods were designed to optimize my knowledge of the landscape, while minimizing labor resources. Many critical questions could be analyzed from above ground. The spatial layout of homesteads, the divisions between cultural groups such as the Khoi, the Xhosa, and the British, and specific areas of cultural activities revealed the ways in which these people coexisted on the land, interacted with each other, and negotiated their rights to resources. By locating sites, defining them by their time period and type of activity, and analyzing their spatial layout in relation to each other, I gained insight into the tensions between these people, how they vied for power, and how they competed for economic wealth. By using photographs from a helicopter survey, information from metal detectors, and repeated pedestrian surveys, I attempted to gather this information from the landscape itself.

I tried to limit excavations to areas that had a high probability of nineteenth century cultural activity as seen through artifacts specifically related to trade or goods used in the nineteenth century. If a test pit indicated twentieth century occupation, I



moved to another location. Criteria used to excavate varied from one area to the next depending on the availability of our research tools, variation in the environment, and whether or not we found artifacts on the surface. In order to answer questions about cultural contact across the Keiskamma River Valley, I had to compile evidence above the ground, whittle down the area to find critical areas for excavation, and piece together specific activity areas with an understanding of the region as a whole.

In order to gain the most reliable data about complex regions, a multi-disciplinary approach is the most appropriate means for studying a contact period site. Archaeological methods, oral traditions, and the written record can together document the past in a more complete way. The next chapter describes my archaeological findings and their specific contributions towards an understanding of cultural change within a trade fair setting.

## CHAPTER 6

### GLIMPSES OF THE PAST THROUGH ARTIFACTS

Although some archaeologists have visited the Fort Willshire area, few have conducted extensive excavations. Apart from the limited surface collections of R.M. Derricourt (1977), the region surrounding the Fort Willshire ruins has virtually been unexplored by archaeologists conducting formal research. To familiarize myself with the environment and the cultural landscape, I originally intended to survey four of the surrounding locations or communal lands in systematic transects radiating away from the Fort Willshire ruins. After visiting each location and walking over the land with elders, I decided that the area was too large to cover extensively given limited time and money.

To gain the most insight and collect a sufficiently large sample, I focused on the areas immediately surrounding Fort Willshire and the lands of Ntilini yaseNgcabasa (see Chapter 5 for discussion on survey methods). While I conducted less formal reconnaissance procedures throughout the valley, in these areas, I ran extensive excavations. Locations of test units were based upon examination of aerial reconnaissance pictures, aerial photographs, walking the area with a GPS, metal detector surveys, and information about site locations obtained from elders.

During the initial reconnaissance, many activity areas were found on the outskirts of the forested and dense vegetated areas, and within the more grassy flat areas. GPS coordinates were recorded for these sites.<sup>1</sup> After some of these sites were revisited and

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<sup>1</sup> A list is housed at the Albany Museum in Grahamstown, South Africa.

metal detector surveys were conducted, a few of these areas were chosen for extensive excavations.

This chapter describes a number of the findings recorded from reconnaissance work, shovel test pit surveys, and the detailed information provided by extensive excavations. It provides profiles that illustrate the stratigraphy of each test unit and tables that organize the artifacts according to their associated layers. Most of the archaeological collection reveals information about the Fort Willshire fairs, however some artifacts and activity areas do provide more insight about the general history of the valley or a later period after the Fort Willshire Trade Fairs. Other findings represent activities apart from trade.

While the units in the fair grounds and the parked wagon area revealed significant information about the traders and trade during the fairs, other findings related to the fort revealed more about the occupants of the fort rather than the cultural and economic interactions of the traders. On the Xhosa side of the Keiskamma River, sites sometimes revealed more about later nineteenth century to twentieth century activities in the valley. The biggest challenge on that side of the river was to distinguish later information from evidence associated with the early nineteenth century. Preliminary surveys allowed us to define more clearly relevant sites for understanding trade in the region.

### **Activity Areas Located In Landscape Surveys**

Although we surveyed the landscape and took GPS readings from Dikidikana to Ntilini yaseNgcabasa, we spent most of our time focusing on the area immediately surrounding Fort Willshire and in the Ngcabasa Valley. For comparative information, we also surveyed sites such as Botha's Post, Fort Brown, Fort Double Drift, and Maqoma's

Kraal. I took GPS readings at each of these sites, but I only conducted a thorough survey at Maqoma's Kraal. Unlike the other sites, this area provided insight specifically for identifying other Xhosa sites. At Maqoma's Kraal and in the Keiskamma River Valley, I took GPS readings of surface features and artifact clusters, unusual changes in the environment, and areas endowed with cultural meaning by local informants.

I chose the other forts and sites by their proximity to Fort Willshire and the route from Grahamstown to the amalgamated game reserves (including Double Drift, Andries Vosloo, and Sam Knott). Since nineteenth century British forts dot the entire frontier border, I wanted to visit the ones closest to Fort Willshire to gain a relative idea of the structure of the forts, their layout in relation to the environment, and their degree of preservation. Botha's Post, Fort Brown, and Fort Double Drift were all either located near Fort Willshire or on the route to Grahamstown.

Each structure had undergone significant changes and was in a much better condition than the Fort Willshire ruins. The center of Botha's Post was converted into a modern house and Fort Brown was turned into a police station. Officials at the Double Drift game reserve took measures to preserve Fort Double Drift. They cleared the vegetation around the fort, placed support bars on the walls, and created a sign that introduced the fort to tourists.

Archaeologists have also worked at both Botha's Post and Fort Double Drift. Under a cultural resource management contract, Lita Webley conducted a surface collection at Botha's Post. Patricia Jeppson and Simon Hall ran an archaeological excavation at Fort Double Drift. From a brief look at their collections, I recognized some similarities to the Fort Willshire collection. The transfer printed white-bodied wares

came in a wide range of various colors, and in comparison to the percentage of colonial artifacts, only a few artifacts symbolized an African indigenous presence. Unlike those collections, the sherds found at Fort Willshire seemed much more fragmented and smaller in size.

Although we were not able to collect findings from Maqoma's Kraal, we gained much insight from our surveys of the area.<sup>2</sup> Simon Hall recommended surveying an early nineteenth century Xhosa kraal to gain an idea of what to expect on the east side of the Keiskamma River in the Ngcabasa Valley. Since we were finding ambiguous surface remains in Ngcabasa, I needed a comparative Xhosa homestead. I chose the former homestead of the Great Chief Maqoma. Maqoma was a son of Ngqika and a great chief at the time of the Fort Willshire trade fairs. According to archaeologists, no previous archaeological research was conducted at Maqoma's Kraal and few knew of its exact location.

After speaking to P.P. Jacobs, the owner of Brake Fontein, and Professor Makunga, the owner of the Macoma's Kraal farm, I gained research permission from the local chief and elders.<sup>3</sup> With consent, we went in search of the site and began surveys. We located Maqoma's kraal based on the information of locals. Evidence seemed to indicate that the homestead was located on the Brake Fontein farm. Although we could not dig or collect surface findings, we surveyed the area in 5 meter transects, recorded a number of surface features, and documented artifact clusters. We found a number of activity areas and took 13 GPS readings.

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<sup>2</sup> We only had a permit for the Fort Willshire area.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Makunga became the owner of Macoma's Kraal in 1990. The farm is most likely named after the Great Chief Maqoma. The name of the chief is spelled differently in various written records. According to Makunga, previous owners of the farm include Slater, Bezuidenhoud, and Cockcroft.

In the middle of the site, we discovered an L-shaped row of exotic cactus that surrounded a center cactus tree. The trees reached over six meters in height and surrounded remnants of a large iron kettle fragment. We took a reading at the north end of this row.

About 5 meters to the west of this feature, we found the brick and stone foundation of a two-room house. The foundation seemed to represent a standard hall-and-parlor layout. To the west of that foundation, we found more scatters of ceramics, including transfer printed pearlwares, whitewares, porcelain, and red coarse earthenwares. We discovered glass, faunal remains, and shell.

South of the L-shaped feature, we found similar yet larger clusters of artifacts, including fauna, shell, and transfer printed pearlware and whiteware. We also found a pile of stones that resembled isivivane and was covered with *Plumbago* flowers. Although the majority of the site was a large grassy open area, there were a few areas marked by changes in the environment. West of the L-shaped cactus row, there were two dirt patches. In these grassless areas, the dirt was sunken below the surface for approximately two to five inches. We recorded a few points along the border of the site, which was marked by changes in the environment, trees, and in some areas an old fence.

What is interesting to note is that while we found it difficult to find large amounts of nineteenth century artifacts in the Ngcabasa area, at this site we found a wealth of surface features and artifact scatters. Perhaps the transitory state of the Fort Willshire region left the Xhosa side of the river absent of very dense artifact clusters. The survey of Maqoma's Kraal nevertheless gave me an idea of the types of features and artifact scatters to look for in Ntilini yaseNgcabasa. Although we found a number of features,

artifact clusters, and environmental changes in the Ngcabasa valley, we never found a site that had the same degree of archaeological potential as that of Maqoma's Kraal.

We did however find a number of sites and activity areas marked by small surface collections. Game reserve officials and local elders pointed out traditional medicinal plants, indigenous and introduced plants, and any areas previously occupied or used by their ancestors or noted in oral traditions (see Chapter 4).

My first goal in this area was to document any possible foot crossings over the Keiskamma River that would have served as a path for the Xhosa traders. Directly across from Fort Willshire, the river runs fiercely and is extremely wide. Thanks to local game officials and Xhosa informants, we nevertheless found and took readings at three possible crossing points. Crossing two is the most direct route from Fort Willshire to the area where the Xhosa valley flattens out, and on the fort side, it is near a large windmill. On the Xhosa side, we found a possible feature that consisted of circles of stones arranged in a figure eight. Although we had to hack through dense vegetation to reach the crossing from the fort side, we had easy access to the crossing from the Xhosa side.

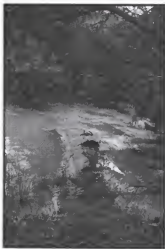


Figure 6.1 Possible Crossing Over the Keiskamma River



Figure 6.2 Cement Weir Over the Keiskamma River

After Fort Willshire closed down, farmers moved into the area and hired assistants from the nearby Xhosa locations. Since these assistants would risk their lives making their way over crossing two, farmers laid down a cement weir in which they etched the date that it was built, "22-8-1977". Although the cement weir is there today, it is still difficult to cross the river safely. Unlike crossing two, crossing one and three are much shorter and further away from Fort Willshire. Crossing three is upstream and east from the other two crossings.

### Survey of Stratum 1

Apart from these crossings, we found many artifact clusters and changes in the environment on the Xhosa side of the river. We began our survey of Ntlini yaseNgcabasa in stratum 1, which is the Xhosa area closest to Fort Willshire.

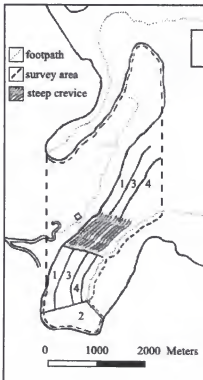


Figure 6.3 Map of Survey Area



The Keiskamma River bordered the area on the west and a fence marked the border on the north. This was the area where we recorded GPS readings of a crossing that connected the fort to Xhosaland. This weir marked the south border of the survey area. We began the survey in this area because it was closest to the river and directly adjacent to the river's main crossing.

In stratum 1, we found many features, activity areas, and scattered artifacts. We found a number of large stone piles that I interpreted as possible graves. Unlike the isivivane stone pile at Maqoma's Kraal, these stones were larger and they were arranged in elongated ovals (about the size of a grave). In one area, we found approximately five of these stone piles cloistered together. We also found a smaller and rounder pile of stones that possibly represented isivivane and marked direction and location. We found remnants of a stone wall. Except for the stone piles that represented possible isivivane, all of the stone features seemed to be associated with isolated clumps of trees and overgrown vegetation.

Apart from these features, we recorded the probable location of a past millet field, which was identified by informants as a "millie" field. Between the southwest corner of this field and the river, we found a fence. On the opposite end of the fence, we discovered a scatter of tiny shell and slag. This activity area was approximately 2 meters in length and most likely part of the riverbed gravel or the remnants of a small midden. Approximately 10 meters north of the shell, we found a stone pile or isivivane. The Xhosa often place stones on piles before they cross the river. About 60 meters away from that stone pile, we found the stonewall foundation. Approximately 140 meters north of the stone wall, we found an Acheulian biface hand axe and a stone flake.

## Survey of Stratum 2

We surveyed stratum 2 in 50 meter transects, walking from east to west towards the direction of the windmill near Fort Willshire. Stratum 2 is the area in the southern most tip of Ntlini yaseNgcabasa. It begins at the end of the footpath and covers an equal amount of land on either side of the path. We took a GPS reading on the east border of the stratum where we began our survey. In this area, we found a grassy field and one unglazed, African, coarse earthenware sherd, or Iron Age pottery. It was black and burnished on the inside.

In this stratum, we also found many other artifact clusters and changes in the environment. We found a number of large stone piles similar to those found in stratum 1 and reminiscent of gravesites. One meter north of the grassy field, we found remnants of a grave, and approximately 50 meters north of that we found remains of a possible second grave.

We found circular mounds that I interpreted as possible remnants of mud huts, or *khayas*. I based this interpretation on standing modern huts, recently abandoned and decaying hut foundations, and advice from other researchers. I consulted with South Africans who came to visit the region, including archaeologists such as Lita Webley, Alex Schoeman, Zuki Jakavula and Mani Opperman. In addition, the spatial distribution of the mounds seemed to represent typical Xhosa homesteads. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Xhosa used to bury their dead close to the homestead. The mounds were often associated with stone piles or possible gravesites, and they were arranged around grassy areas the approximate size and shape of central kraals.

Approximately 40 meters south and 15 meters west of the second grave, we found evidence of the first hut, khaya 1. A circular patch that was elevated and marked by yellow grass defined its characteristics. Its close proximity to grave 2 seemed to suggest that both features were part of the same homestead. Approximately 890 meters north and 100 meters west, we found khaya 2, or evidence of a second home. This area was marked by an elevated circular area or large mound. Khayas 3, 4, and 5 were also similar circular dirt patches or mounds. Khaya 3 was located 130 meters away from khaya 2 and khaya 4 was located 21 meters away from khaya 3. We found khaya 5 approximately 180 meters away from khaya 4. Near khaya 4, we discovered a grassy area, modern piping, and remnants of a tin sheet commonly used for roofing.

In addition to the evidence suggesting past homesteads, we found a few activity areas. Approximately 6 meters west of the first mound or possible hut, we found indications of a possible midden. We discovered salt glazed stoneware, iron fragments, and most likely modern porcelain. This scatter of artifacts was associated with a yellow grassy field and a grave. Approximately 119 meters west of this activity area, we found possible evidence of a second midden or activity area. Faunal remains, including a skull, and iron fragments marked the site. In this area, we also found a possible cartridge. About 70 meters west of khaya 5, we found evidence of a third midden or activity area. On the surface, we found hand painted whiteware and a fragment of a jar made of green glass. The artifacts seemed to suggest that the area was modern. About 30 meters away from the second midden, we found a rectangular grassy field associated with mounds in two corners. I took GPS readings in the four corners. On the west side of this area, we found a scatter of seed beads.

### Survey of Stratum 3

Stratum 3 is bordered on the west side by stratum 1 and on the east side by stratum 4. To the northeast of it, we found a very steep slope that was forested and covered with dense vegetation. Stratum 2 marks its south border. Stratum 3 is also at a higher elevation than stratum 1. In this area, we found a number of features that most likely represented middens, graves, and previous homesteads.

Areas of possible homesteads seemed to be marked by specific changes in the environment. We found a circular dirt mound located close to another large mound and surrounded by a flat area. Both were grassless dirt patches located in a grassy field and associated with a single tree. About 130 meters away from the first mound, the second mound was slightly destroyed by animal holes that revealed no artifacts. Considering sites of decayed modern huts, I interpreted this site to be a possible hut and labeled it as khaya 6 and 7. About 40 meters downhill from the second mound, we found another circular area that suggested a hut once stood there (khaya 8). A sunken top layer and yellow grass defined this third feature. The spatial distribution and the shape of the mounds altogether suggested that they represented past hut structures.

About 320 meters away from khaya 6, we found khaya 9, which was marked by a circular pattern of dirt without grass. About 10 meters away, we found evidence of another hut (khaya 10). About 340 meters away from khaya 9, we found the stone foundation of a structure that was most likely another hut. It was associated with euphorbia trees that rose approximately 3 meters in height. The incomplete feature seemed to be remains of a square structure. In the general area, we found remains of three more possible structures.

Approximately 40 meters south of this site, we located scatters of hand painted modern ironstone or whiteware. Thirty meters from this area, we found remnants of a previous homestead. A grassy area with two circular patterns of grassless dirt defined it.

Twenty meters away from that homestead, we found evidence of yet another homestead. In this area, we found two lower grinding stones associated with blue and clear glass. One was complete, while the other was only half of a lower grinding stone. These artifacts were found near remains of a mud foundation and a scatter of ironstone fragments and hand painted whiteware. Although the lower grinding stones could be associated with an earlier time period, the ironstone and whiteware suggested that the site was dated to the twentieth century.

Evidence of a hut lay nearby. Thirty meters away, we found evidence of a gravesite that included three possible graves. The vegetation was overgrown and included a clump of large cactus. Remains of a homestead were nearby and were defined by a grassy field and two circular dirt patterns.

Forty meters away from this area, we found a scatter of wine or liquor bottle glass fragments. They were dark green and very thick. Although there were no indications of patination on the glass, the color and thickness of the glass indicated that the pieces were manufactured in the nineteenth century. This was a significant insight because it represented a period related to those of the Fort Willshire trade fairs.

Near khaya 10, we found a mound associated with dark green wine glass. This glass lacked any indications of patination and was most likely modern glass. Close to the mound, we located indications of five or more graves. They were located near a grassy patch.

### **Survey of Stratum 5**

The north border of stratum 5 consists of a wire fence that marks the boundary between Ngqolowa and Ngcabasa. The Keiskamma River lies to the west, and the footpath of Ntilini yaseNgcabasa defines the east border. To the south there is a steep, rocky, and dense cliff that lies between stratum 5 and strata 1, 3, and 4.

We began surveying this area from the remnants of a Khoi house on the top of the hill (see Chapter 5). From this house, we surveyed the lower half of what informants called the Khoi area, stratum 5. Moving in 50 meter transects west towards the Keiskamma and south towards the other strata, we found the border of a euphorbia forest. They grew on the densely packed, steep, and rocky part of the cliff. We also found one area that was outlined by a dense clump of euphorbia trees, rocky terrain, and hardly any grass. Stratum 5 mainly consisted of dense euphorbia trees and vegetation.

### **Survey of Dikidikana**

The communal lands of Dikidikana border Ngcabasa to the north. After meeting with the chairman and elders, we did a preliminary survey of the area to gain a sense of how it compared to the sites at Ngcabasa. Elders accompanied us and pointed out significant areas. We focused on the valley of Dikidikana, known as Ngxinanweni. This was the area closest to the river.

We found remnants of mud structures, two more crossings to the fort side of the Keiskamma River (called Welakabini), and different activity areas. Elders pointed out places where past structures once stood. They informed us that the area was cleared and that homesteads were abandoned in the 1940s. People moved closer to the main roads to have easier access to the bigger towns and cities.

In the valley, we found a circular dirt mound that represented the remains of a mud hut. Elders informed us that this particular house was definitely abandoned in the 1940s. About 60 meters north and 100 meters west of this site, we found a similar feature, which I interpreted as the remains of a second hut.

Our interpreter and the cultural facilitator from the Double Drift Game Reserve, Klaas also pointed out differences in the environment. We found krongxina, which is a type of grass that can kill cattle. To cure the animal, the Xhosa mash the bulb of this plant, boil it, and feed it to the sick animal. We found a thorn tree in which the bark was used for medicinal purposes. To heal a broken bone, the Xhosa wrap the bark of the tree around the break. The elders took us to Ngqika's tree on the hill. This site was made of three intertwined trees, including one milkwood tree, and two *umsenge* trees. The roots of the *umsenge* trees fill up with drinking water for the local Xhosa. The elders said that the Xhosa people would pray for rain under this tree or meet to discuss important issues about the communities. In the past, they used to meet the Great Chief Ngqika under this tree. Today, it is still used for meetings between elders from the different Xhosa locations.

Apart from these culturally significant areas in the valley, we found a few activity areas. We found a scatter of six glass seed beads that most likely marked a midden. We discovered a cluster of four stone piles that represented either graves or isivivane. We found another two stone piles near a possible mound and a stream, and we found a possible grave with hardly any vegetation covering it. We documented four areas that had evidence of past homesteads. One was associated with modern blue glass, and the

other one was marked by a stone wall and modern porcelain. Mounds and huge grassy areas defined the other two.

From a preliminary survey, we gained similar information to the evidence collected at Ngcabasa. Since the main crossing over Keiskamma connected to Ngcabasa, we focused our attentions on Ngcabasa and the area surrounding Fort Willshire.

### **Findings Beneath the Ground: Excavations**

After walking the area, recording surface features, and conducting preliminary shovel test pit surveys, we had a better understanding of the landscape. An analysis of the spatial distribution of surface finds and the contents of shovel test pits helped us identify areas for further excavation. Based on this information, we conducted more extensive tests in three areas on the fort side and four areas on the Xhosa side of the Keiskamma River. Surrounding the fort, we focused on the parked wagon area (STP 61), the second parked wagon area (STP 64), and the Horn Core and Bead area (STP 32). Although the Horn Core and Bead area was discussed in Chapter 5, the other two activity areas are discussed below.

#### **Parked Wagon Area (STP 61) - Stratigraphy**

Travelers and traders describe small fires across the landscape surrounding Fort Willshire. The stratigraphy of the midden in the parked wagon area, STP 61, strongly supported this observation. Layers of ash upon layers of ash represented the blazing fires of the past. In this area, I opened two 1 meter x 1 meter test units side by side (see figure 7.1). My crew excavated each square in 5 cm levels measuring from the surface. They started new levels with the appearance of stratigraphic changes.



Since the sterile soil immediately surrounding Fort Willshire is very shallow and densely packed, remains of cultural activity often remain uncovered. This was the case in the parked wagon area. From the surface, I could see traces of black gray ash interspersed with thin short grasses. This layer went from 0 cm to 20 cm below the surface on one end and as deep as 35 cm on the other end. Under the black gray ash, we uncovered two small pockets of dark black ash and a thin layer of khaki reddish soil. Below the ash and khaki reddish soil was a layer of mixed brick and rock, which extended from 20 cm to 47 cm at the deepest point. The third layer consisted of black gray ash mixed with white ash and the fourth was a layer of khaki reddish soil. Pockets of pure white ash interspersed these levels. Before sterile, the last layer consisted of a mix of light tan and brown soils with few artifacts. The sterile bottom started at 55 cm below the surface on one end and 65 cm on the other. Although the depth of the layers changed from one end of the units to the other, there were five general layers (see figure 7.1). Since I chose to uncover sections of the layers in a 1m x 1m unit rather than open up more units to define complete features, I labeled changes in the stratigraphy as layers. I nevertheless interpreted these layered sections as features. The color and consistency of the soil and the artifacts within each layer seemed to support this interpretation.

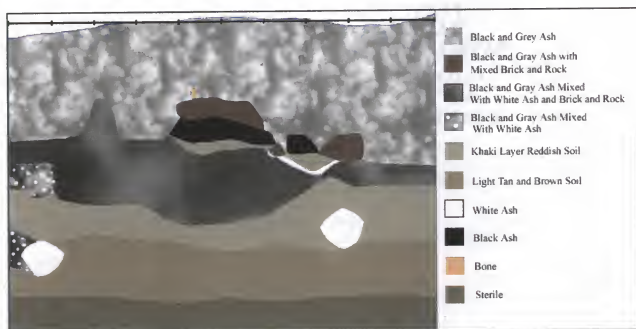


Figure 6.4 Stratigraphy of Midden 1 Test Unit in the Parked Wagon Area (STP 61)

## Content of Levels

From the excavated units in the parked wagon area, we collected a wide variety of artifacts including fauna, ceramics, metal, brick, glass, beads, and various miscellaneous small things. Although we uncovered a significant amount of material, many of the individual artifacts were very small and fragmentary. They seemed to represent the temporary nature of the activities of the traders.

The largest portion of the collection consisted of 617 faunal remains, most of which were bovids of different sizes. In the black and gray ash level from the top, we found bird bone, representatives of sheep or goat, and a number of cattle bones. Many of the bones were too small or too fragmentary to classify beyond broader taxonomic categories.

Based on categories defined by C.K. Brain (1974), respective bovid size classes fell into four basic groups: Bovid I, II, III, and IV. Bovid I included small bovids such as the large common duiker, ranging from 0-50 lbs. or 0-23 kg in size. Bovid II referred to animals such as the large blesbuck, ranging from 50-185 lbs. or 23-84 kg, and Bovid III represented those similar to the size of the large wildebeest or roan antelope, ranging from 185-650 lbs. or 84-296 kg. The largest category, Bovid IV, corresponded to bovids bigger than wildebeest or roan and weighing more than 650 lbs. or 296 kg.

Since most of the fauna samples from layer 1 and throughout the test unit were small and fragmentary, we ended up with large counts in the Bovid II and Bovid III/IV categories (see Table 7.1). Within the Bovid II class, I further separated bones that were most likely *Ovis/Capra* (either sheep or goat) from bones that were less diagnostic but yet the same size. The Bovid IIA category included bones that were most likely *Ovis/Capra* but lacked the definitive characteristics to place them in the *Ovis/Capra* category. When

certain comparative characteristics were present on the bones, I felt a higher level of confidence to identify bones as either *Ovis aries* (sheep) or *Capra hircus* (goat). I took a conservative approach in my analysis and used the criteria outlined by Boessneck's (1969) article on the osteological differences between sheep and goat.

In layer 2 and areas blending into layer 3, we uncovered a larger sample of remains belonging to *Ovis aries*, *Capra hircus*, and the Bovid II/IIa categories. In addition, we found bone fragments belonging to a *Neotis denhami* (Stanley Bustard), a small passerine (bird), and an *Ictonyx striatus* (skunk). We also found bones that were slightly indeterminate. We classified one as an Anatidre indet. The other fragment belonged to either a *Geochelone pardalis* (Leopard tortoise) or a *Chersina angulata* (Bowsprit tortoise). In this layer, we discovered one fragment of each animal. In comparison to the counts within the bovid categories and the Ovis/Capra categories, the sample of wild animals was small.

In layer 3 and 4, we found a high concentration of Bov II/IIa and Bov III/IV fragments. Amongst those remains, we discovered one fragment of *Antidorcus marsupialis* (springbok, antelope class II) and one Cagomorph. Graham Avery, Director of the Archaeology Department at the South African Museum, identified the few remains that represented animals other than bovids.

Table 6.1 Faunal Distribution from Parked Wagon Area (STP 61)

	0-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-30	30-35	35-40	40-45	45-50	50-55	55-60	60-65	65-70	70-75	TOTAL
Aves			1													1
<i>Anthus indet.</i>					1											1
<i>Anderssonia inornata</i>								1								1
<i>Bon. aureus</i>					3	1	7	2	3	4				10		33
<i>Bon. tinus</i> *				3	1			1	2	1						8
<i>Bon.</i>					1			1								2
<i>Bon. I</i>			5													5
<i>Bon. I or IIa</i>						1										1
<i>Bon. II</i>			5	1	18		23	6	3					3		62
<i>Bon. II*</i>				5			3	1								9
<i>Bon. II or IV*</i>							2									2
<i>Bon. IIa</i>					14	10	12	1	4					7		49
<i>Bon. IIa*</i>									1					2		3
<i>Bon. III</i>			1													1
<i>Bon. III*</i>				1			1									2
<i>Bon. III or IV</i>			5		6	4	21	4	4	2				17		62
<i>Bon. III or IV - Bon. tinus*</i>										1						1
<i>Bon. III or IV*</i>			1	2			3									6
<i>Bon. IV*</i>					1						1					2
<i>Bon.*</i>			1	2			1	1				1				5
<i>Chalcophaps</i>								1								1
<i>Candid</i>							1									1
<i>Capra hircus</i>							2	1	2							5
<i>Galba gallus</i>														1		1
<i>Gastrophysa pardalis</i> or <i>Cherons angulata</i>							1									1
<i>Gastrophysa pardalis</i> or <i>Cherons angulata</i> *														1		1
<i>Helicoverpa striatula</i>							1									1
<i>Indet.</i>								1								1
Misc.	1		103	7	2	2	4	11	4	2				2		130
<i>Arctia donhami</i>					1											1
<i>Ovis aries</i>					5	4	18	4	5	3				9		48
<i>Ovis aries*</i>							1	1	4					1		7
<i>Ovis Capra</i>			2		1		1							2		7
Small carnivore*							2									2
Small rodent						1										1
Unid.				1	3			2								6
TOTAL	1	0	124	22	57	23	104	39	32	13	1	0	57			496

## Ceramics

The ceramic collection also reveals typical characteristics that are common of a transitory and temporary settlement. In this test unit, we found 188 ceramic sherds.

Table 7.2 provides the stratigraphic distribution of ceramic classes by depth within 5 cm increments.

Table 6.2 Distribution of Ceramic Types in STP 61

	0-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-30	30-35	35-40	40-45	45-50	50-55	55-60	60-65	TOTAL
Brown Salt Glazed Stoneware										2	1		1	4
Creamware	3		1							1	1			6
Hand Painted Bone China			1											1
Pearlware			1	5	1			2			2	2		13
Pearlware/Whiteware	6		5			2	5	6		5	12		1	42
Porcelain	1													1
Salt Glazed Stoneware	3		3			3	2	2			1	1		15
Stoneware						1								1
Tobacco Pipe Fragment	8		2	7	1	13	5	19		2	8	1	2	68
Underglaze Chinese Porcelain				1				1			1			3
Unglazed coarse earthenware		1												1
Whiteware	5		4	3		7	8			2		1		30
Wormy Finger Slipware				1										1
Yellowware Glaze														0
Yellowware	1						1							2
TOTAL	27	1	18	15	2	26	21	30		12	26	5	4	183

In the first 0-20 cm of the unit, we found mostly white-bodied wares. South African archaeologists use this term as a generalized category for all decorated and undecorated creamwares, pearlwares, and whitewares. Although most of the white-bodied wares in this level were blue transfer printed wares, one had a red transfer print design.

We also found various industrial slipwares and commercial wares. In South Africa, archaeologists use "industrial slipware" as a general term for mochoware, annularware, and wormy finger ware (see Noel Hume 1991, Deetz 1977). Commercial ceramics refer to specific types such as nineteenth century ginger beer bottles and ink bottles. They are often brown salt glazed fired with lead glaze on the interior. There is a small degree of variation amongst different brown salt glazed, and some of them bare a close resemblance to Albany slipped wares. According to Jane Klose (pers. comm. 1989), most of the stonewares that came to South Africa were commercial wares.

Archaeologists have found few other types in the archaeological record throughout South Africa.

In the mixed layers of ash and brick, from 20 cm to 40 cm, we found more of the same types of artifacts as the ones in the shallow levels. The high percentage of white-bodied wares continued throughout the collection from the deeper levels, with the majority of ceramics split into the categories of pearlware, pearlware/whiteware, and whiteware.

The white-bodied wares were divided into these three categories to compensate for different approaches to the analysis of sherds that fall into gray areas or cannot be distinguished from both pearlwares and whitewares. South African archaeologists such as Jane Klose use whitewares as their default categories for artifacts that lack explicit diagnostic characteristics. Whereas American historical archaeologists lump sherds with blue pooling from early nineteenth century sites into the pearlware category, South African archaeologists only use the pearlware category when there is no doubt in their analysis.

Two explanations account for these differences. Since South African historical archaeologists in the Western Cape work on later nineteenth century and early twentieth century sites, they typically uncover a large percentage of whitewares in their collections. Considering other historical archaeological collections, it is more likely that whitewares are predominant than pearlwares on late nineteenth century and early twentieth century sites. For an early nineteenth century site such as Fort Willshire, however, pearlwares should be more prevalent than whitewares. Pearlwares were manufactured before whitewares appeared in the global market.

The majority of the collection from the parked wagon test excavation included all types of white-bodied wares in addition to salt glazed stonewares and tobacco pipe fragments. Pearlwares/whitewares were concentrated in the levels between 0 cm to 15 cm, 30 cm to 40 cm, and 45 cm to 55 cm, whereas whitewares were found in the upper levels between 0 cm to 35 cm. Pearlwares were found in levels between 10 cm to 25 cm, 35 cm to 40 cm, and 50 cm to 60 cm. We found 13 pearlwares, 30 whitewares, and 42 pearlwares/whitewares.

Amongst the white-bodied wares, we found that industrial slipwares, transfer printed wares, pearlwares, and whitewares were distributed equally throughout the test unit. Below the top level of ash, we found fragments of unglazed stonewares, brown salt glazed stonewares, mochawares, mineral or gin bottle salt glazed stonewares and tobacco pipe fragments. We found 68 tobacco pipe fragments, of which 63 were part of tobacco pipe stems.

Table 6.3 Diameters of Tobacco Pipe Stem Fragments Found In Each 5 cm Level

No depth	0-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-30	30-35	35-40	40-45	45-50	50-55	55-60	60-65	TOTAL
1.4	1	2					1	2			1		1	8
1.5	1							2						3
1.6	1	3		2		3		1						10
1.7	6	1		1	1	2		12		1	3	1	1	29
1.8		1		1										2
1.9				2		2								4
2.3							1							1
FRAG	1		1					2			2			6
TOTAL	10	7	1	6	1	8	3	17		1	6	1	2	63

Jean Harrington (1954) first noted that the older the pipes the larger the bore stem diameter. I measured the diameters of each pipe stem fragment (see Table 7.3), and noted that the average bore diameters ranged from 1.4 cm to 2.3 cm (4/64 inches to 6/64 inches). According to Deetz's pipe stem dating chart (1996), the pipe stems with bore



diameters ranging from 1.4 cm to 1.7 cm, approximately 4/64 inches, correspond to the period between 1750 and 1800 (see Appendix A). The pipe stems with diameters 1.8 cm and 1.9 cm, 5/64 inches, correspond to the period between 1720 and 1750, and the pipe stem with a diameter of 2.3 cm, 6/64 inches, corresponds with the period from 1680 to 1720. Since most of the stems in the collection have diameters of 1.7 cm, or 4/64 inches, they fall in the period between 1750 and 1800. Most of the stems with 1.7 diameters came from the layers between 15 cm to 40 cm in depth.

This pattern indicates a quick response to the fairs, heightened popularity, and a sudden end or abandonment. The evidence suggests that traders frequented the fairs for a relatively short period and while they stayed at Fort Willshire their behavior remained constant.

### Glass

In this test unit, we found 191 glass fragments. The collection consisted of bottle glass, case bottle, container, flat, tableware, and wine bottle glass fragments.

Table 6.4 Glass in STP 61

	No. no depth	0-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-30	30-35	35-40	40-45	45-50	50-55	55-60	60-65	TOTAL
bottle	16			6				9	14	10			1	13	53
case bottle														2	2
container	26			1	2	2	1	8	2					3	45
flat	7	3		2	2	1	2	4	1		1		15	2	40
tableware	1														1
OID glass fragment						1							4		5
undeposited container	2														2
wine bottle fragment	13	1		2			2	3	3				2	1	27
TOTAL	55	4		11	4	4	14	29	16		1	1	39	3	191

The majority of the collection consisted of dark green bottle glass, container glass, flat glass, and wine bottle glass fragments. Glass fragments that were too small to be identified were classified as UID, or unidentified glass fragments. Larger glass fragments that lacked explicit diagnostic characteristics yet had curvature in the body were lumped into undiagnostic container glass fragments. Although the fragments fell into different categories based on their individual characteristics, most of them were dark green and probably remnants of liquor or wine bottle glass.

The deeper levels of the test unit contained the highest percentage of glass fragments. Perhaps this was reflective of a tentative start of the fairs. Although many traders attended the fairs in the beginning, perhaps they waited to see if the fairs would be successful before bringing pieces of meat and other goods that were needed for a longer stay.

### **Second Midden Area in the Parked Wagon Area (STP 64)**

#### **Stratigraphy**

Once wagons of traders arrived at Fort Willshire, they most likely dotted the landscape on the east side of the fort. From STP 61, surface collections radiated outward and covered the area continuously to STP 64 and beyond. Although they indicated that related activity areas defined by layers of ash extended throughout the area, they revealed subtle differences. On the surface of STP 64, we found African unglazed and undecorated coarse earthenware.

Since this finding suggested cultural interaction on the spot, we dug a 1 meter x 1 meter test unit in this area (see figure 7.2). Layer 1 consisted of gray and black ash interspersed with a layer of dark brown soil mixed with gray ash. A lens of pure black

ash also appeared within these two layers. Just below level 2, we uncovered a layer of light brown soil mixed with gray and white ash. Pockets of dark brown and gray ash were mixed into this third layer. Before we reached sterile, we found a layer of dark brown soil with black ash and pockets of khaki soil mixed with gray ash. In this level, we also found a pocket of gray and white ash.

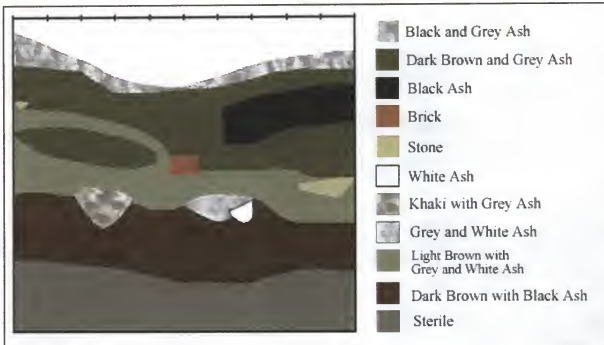


Figure 6.5 Stratigraphy of Midden 2 Test Unit in the Parked Wagon Area (STP 64)

### **Contents of Levels**

In STP 64, we found a wide range of artifacts including 152 faunal, 32 glass fragments, 205 ceramics sherds, 129 metal, 1196 beads, and 52 bags of charred material. Historical pictures and maps of surface scatters indicated that this test unit, like STP 61, corresponded to the parked wagon area. Along with surface collections, this test unit seemed to suggest that deposits were contiguous along this side of the fort and that they represented similar and related activity areas.

Most of the artifacts were small and fragmentary, indicating again that the area was a temporary settlement. The fauna collection included only certain choice pieces. The ceramic sherds were often too small to calculate minimum vessel counts and the glass fragments were also small.

Unlike STP 61 however, certain artifacts clearly represented contact with indigenous traders or access to indigenous manufactured goods. In addition to African unglazed coarse earthenware scattered on the surface, we found glass seed beads throughout the unit. Although glass beads made up the largest part of the collection from this unit and suggested trade on this spot, the fauna still defined this area as a resting space for the colonial traders.

### **Fauna**

Most of the fauna in STP 64, like STP 61, were small and fragmentary. In this test unit, we also collected a large amount of pieces that belonged in the Bovid II categories (see Table 7.5), suggesting a high proportion of sheep and goat. We found only select cuts of bone and most of these revealed evidence of charring, scraping, cutting, chopping and sawing.

Table 6.5 Faunal Distribution in STP 64

	Khaki w/gray	?	0-5	20-25	25-30	30-37	38-47	40-45	41-52	45-51	55-60	60-65	65-70	TOTAL
<i>Bos taurus</i>			4	1	2	3		5		1	8			24
Bov II	6	6		16			3	1			1			33
Bov II?		1												1
Bov IIA*				1										1
Bov IIA	5			2		1		3			1			12
Bov III/IV		4		1		1	3	1			7		1	18
Bov III/IV?	1							2						3
Bov III/IV*		1												1
Bov IV?									1					1
Bov IV	1													1
<i>Canis</i>				1										1
<i>Capra hircus</i>													1	1
<i>Gallus gallus</i>							1							1
Misc	1	1		4		2	1	3	5	1	3		1	22
<i>Ovis aries</i>	7	3	2	6				2	1		2	1	2	26
Ovis/Capra	2					1					2			5
UID													1	1
TOTAL	23	16	6	32	2	8	8	17	7	2	24	1	6	152

Since the stratigraphy of STP 64 involved intertwined complex layers, we grouped some artifacts by soil color. The table above reflects the distribution of fauna by 5 centimeter levels except in cases where the levels were too intertwined to define discrete intervals. Between 40 centimeters and 55 centimeters in depth, fauna were further divided into layers based on their associated soil types.

Most of the fauna throughout the unit consisted of remains belonging to sheep and cattle. The majority of the collection was found in the layers between 20 centimeters and 25 centimeters and between 55 centimeters and 65 centimeters. In layer 1, between 0 centimeters to 12 centimeters, we found mainly sheep and cattle. Layer 2 was more

complex to analyze. On one side of the unit, the layer extended from 12 centimeters to 23 centimeters and on the other side of the unit, it reached a depth of 43 centimeters. In this layer, we found a large portion of miscellaneous fragments, pieces grouped into Bov II and Bov III categories, and remains of *Bos taurus*. The lower levels of the unit also seemed to exhibit similar trends to the top levels.

### Ceramics

While the ceramic collection from STP 64 was similar to that of STP 61, it was slightly larger and consisted of 205 fragments (see Table 7.6). The pieces were again small and fragmentary, and although we found African unglazed course earthenware on the surface of the unit, we found mostly European manufactured sherds below ground. The collection consisted largely of pearlware/whitewares (the intermediary category), creamwares, definitive pearlwares and pure whitewares.

The majority of the sherds were decorated with blue and white transfer printed designs. Many of them were burnt. Very few porcelain sherds were found and the collection contained no full sets of pottery. Although we found no fragments that cross-mended to construct a complete or near complete vessel, we could still determine the possible function of many of the sherds. They appeared to serve as tableware.

The ceramic collection from STP 64 supported the interpretation of the unit as part of the parked wagon area. The types of ceramics indicated that traders either came from middle to lower class families or that they brought the one or two plates they were willing to break or leave at the site. Although African unglazed course earthenware was found on the surface of the unit, the rest of the ceramic collection revealed few indications of trade or a direct African presence. They did however provide insight about

the lifestyles of the British traders at Fort Willshire. We found a large percentage of tobacco pipe stem fragments. The ceramic collection thus showed that throughout the parked wagon area, traders were eating around fires, smoking, and using the one or two plates they brought from home.

Table 6.6 Ceramic Distribution of STP 64

	?	0-10	10-20	14-16	16-20	20-25	28-49	30-34	32-37	34-38	38-49	40-52	50-60	60-65	65-70	70-75	TOTAL
coarse earthenware			1														1
Creamware				1	1			1	1			7	5	1	3		20
Pearlware		1				1						9	8		1	2	22
pearlware/whiteware	8	3	5	2	4		1	5	2	4	3	15	16	4	7	1	80
salt glazed stoneware	2	1	1					1		1		2					8
Tobacco pipe fragment	5			2	3	3	1	1	2	2	5	7	1		3		35
Porcelain												1					1
Whiteware	11	1		1		4		2				7	9		3		38
TOTAL	28	6	7	6	8	8	2	10	5	7	8	48	39	5	17	3	205

## Glass

Not only were traders smoking and eating around glowing fires, but they were also drinking. The glass collection of STP 64 consisted of a large percentage of bottle, container, and wine bottle fragments. While the set, consisting of 32 fragments apart from glass beads, was much smaller than the collection from STP 61, it still supported the interpretation that beverage containers were deposited on the site. The evidence also indicated that this occurred during an early stage of the fairs. Most of the fragments were found in the lower levels of the test unit (see Table 7.7), and the majority of the collection consisted of bottle glass fragments.



Table 6.7 Glass Distribution in STP 64

	30-35	40-50	50-60	60-65	65-70	70-75	TOTAL
Bottle	2	0	8	0	7	1	18
container	0	0	1	0	1	1	3
Flat	0	1	2	0	3		6
wine bottle	1	0	0	1	2	1	5
TOTAL	3	1	11	1	13	3	32

In addition to these glass sherds, we found a large percentage of glass seed beads (n=1196) throughout the unit. The collection from STP 64, unlike that from STP 61, indicated that traders were counting their bead supplies, depositing them, or trading on the spot.

Table 6.8 Glass Seed Beads By Depth From STP 64

<u>Depth (cm)</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cumulative Frequency</u>	<u>Cumulative Percent</u>
0-12	14	1.40	14	1.40
11.5-14	10	1.00	24	2.4
14-16	74	7.40	98	9.80
16-20	4	0.40	102	10.20
20-23	2	0.20	104	10.40
33	5	0.50	109	10.90
34-41	1	0.10	110	11.00
35-49	7	0.70	117	11.70
38-43	3	0.30	120	12.00
38-48	13	1.30	133	13.30
40-42	115	11.50	248	24.80
41-45	53	5.30	301	30.10
41-47	27	2.70	328	32.80
46	13	1.30	341	34.10
49-51	13	1.30	354	35.40
5-10	7	0.70	361	36.10
50-51	10	1.00	371	37.10
51-57	45	4.50	416	41.60
51-59	58	5.80	474	47.40
51-60	34	3.40	508	50.80
52	18	1.80	526	52.60
53	17	1.70	543	54.30
57	222	22.20	765	76.50
57-60	61	6.10	826	82.60
60-65	144	14.40	970	97.00
67	30	3.00	1000	100.00

Since the total frequency of beads from STP 64 equals 1196, the frequency missing from the table includes 196 beads. Only depth measurements were recorded for 1000 beads. Analyzed in SAS, the beads above are organized by depth in relation to soil differences.<sup>4</sup> While overlaps in depth levels seem complex, they nevertheless reveal that the majority of the beads were found in the lower levels, between 50 centimeters and 67 centimeters. Twice as many beads were found in these levels in comparison to the top 50 centimeters.

This pattern is consistent with interpretations constructed from historical written records. Enticing indigenous traders for the supply of beads, the fairs were successful in the beginning. As Europeans flooded the market and illicit trade grew, bead values began to fluctuate until the fairs finally closed. The beads from STP 64 reflect the consistent importance of beads throughout the fairs, while also highlighting the prevalence of beads during the beginning of the fairs and the slight decline towards the end.

The beads furthermore provide information about the ways in which the Xhosa defined their identity. A color chart of the beads found in STP 64 reveal that various shades of blue, white, and decorated whites dominated the collection (see Table 7.10). Very few other colors were found, including shades of red, yellow, and green. The large percentage of blue and white beads signifies that the bead trade consisted primarily of those colors. Red beads were considered more exclusive. Perhaps the other colors were also deemed more valuable. Since the Ngqika Xhosa used particular colors to distinguish them from other chiefdoms, they most likely used blue and white beads as adornments and for ornamental clothing.

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<sup>4</sup> Dr. Ken Mease, from the University of Florida, ran the bead data through SAS.

Table 6.9 Frequency of Bead Collection by Color (STP 64)

Color	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
blue	314	26.25	314	26.25
black	2	0.17	316	26.42
brownish yellow	1	0.08	317	26.51
clear	1	0.08	318	26.59
green	1	0.08	319	26.67
pink	8	0.67	327	27.34
royal blue	196	16.39	523	43.73
red	6	0.50	529	44.23
red w/black interior	3	0.25	532	44.48
turquoise	21	1.76	556	46.24
white	612	51.17	1165	97.41
white interior				
w/blue-black exterior	1	0.08	1166	97.49
white w/blue dots	1	0.08	1167	97.58
white w/blue stripes	1	0.08	1168	97.66
white w/green				
and red stripes	1	0.08	1169	97.74
white w/indented				
stripes-no color	1	0.08	1170	97.83
white w/red stripes	14	1.17	1184	99.00
white w/red swirl	1	0.08	1185	99.08
white w/red				
and blue stripes	5	0.42	1190	99.50
white w/yellow				
bone tinge	1	0.08	1191	99.58
yellow	4	0.33	1195	99.92
yellow(?)	1	0.08	1196	100.00

## Conclusion

While excavations on the fort side of the river revealed significant information about trade, interaction between traders, and the daily activities of traders themselves, excavations on the Xhosa side of the Keiskamma River revealed more about Xhosa life in general. Although we dug in four separate areas of Ngcabasa, we found little that corresponded to the fort. The excavations in Ngcabasa also seemed to represent mixed nineteenth and twentieth century material assemblages.

Although more testing still needs to be done throughout the Keiskamma River Valley, we gained considerable information about the trade fairs and the exchange of material goods that were produced by different cultures. The archaeological findings reveal specific details about the events that occurred on the fair grounds and the evidence gathered from surveys indicates the complexity of land use on the Xhosa side.

Excavations highlight the importance of beads and cattle to trade, and they provide details about the diets of transitory traders. They also reveal how land on the Xhosa side was used and reused, thus slightly obscuring the temporal periods associated with otherwise discrete groups of material culture.

Although it was difficult to distinguish twentieth century Xhosa settlements from nineteenth century Xhosa settlements, we nevertheless gained a sense of how the Xhosa made use of their environment and the materials available to them. We found nineteenth century artifacts on nineteenth century sites as well as twentieth century sites. We found lower grinding stones in association with corrugated tin roofing, and nineteenth century ceramic sherds mixed with modern beer glass.

In addition, the older sites often left little remains or evidence of their presence. Perhaps this is related to the early construction of thatched huts, structures that leave little evidence of their existence unless they were destroyed by fire.

Despite these difficulties, certain markers connected a few Xhosa activity areas to the early nineteenth century, the period of the Fort Willshire trade fairs. Scatters of nineteenth century wine bottle glass, remains of slag, fragments of stoneware, and changes in the landscape offered insight about Xhosa life in the nineteenth century. The proximity of possible graves to markers of past huts is in line with the ethnographic models and historical records of past homesteads. In the nineteenth century, graves were usually buried near the kraal or within the kraal near the huts. The graves that we located were often found near evidence of huts or possible kraal spaces.

The evidence outlined in this chapter is significant because it offers specific details that are often overlooked in the written record. From the archaeological record we gain an idea of the different events during the fairs, the spatial distribution of traders, and the changes in domestic space for the Xhosa living on the other side. We also gain a regional perspective in the valley over time.

## CHAPTER 7

### TRAVELING ROUTES OF MATERIAL CULTURE: DESCRIBING THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSEMBLAGE

The archaeological methods discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 led to uncovering the cultural materials described in this chapter. Many of the artifacts found at Fort Willshire and throughout the surrounding Keiskamma River Valley related to trade, cultural interaction, and the economy of the Eastern Cape. They also provided glimpses of everyday life for the traders at the Fort Willshire fairs. Fragments of plates, forks, and bones in layers upon layers of ash and bits of charred wood painted pictures of traders sitting around crackling night fires. Other deposits represented specialized craft traditions and symbolic practices related to ideological beliefs. A close look at these remnants of the past and how they were discarded over the landscape revealed insights about the subsistence practices of European traders, in what ways indigenous people influenced colonial culture, and how their interaction led to culture change.

By tracing the origins of the artifact assemblage, we can see to what extent the trade fairs and hence the Xhosa were part of a global exchange network. In addition, we can see how the British took advantage of pre-existing trade routes in order to exploit the material demands of indigenous people. A British monopoly over material resources and the increasing participation of the Xhosa in a global economic system signaled an end to Xhosa independence. While the Fort Willshire Trade Fairs were designed to control tension across the frontier, they also controlled the flow of goods in and out of the Eastern Cape.

This chapter describes the archaeological findings in the Keiskamma River Valley and around Fort Willshire. It outlines the history of each artifact, their origins of manufacture, and the routes they traveled to arrive in the Eastern Cape. The analysis of this archaeological material offers insights about specific events in the lives of the Xhosa, European traders, British occupants of Fort Willshire, and other people living in the Keiskamma River Valley during the nineteenth century.

A wide variety of artifacts were uncovered in this valley, including glass beads, fauna, and ceramics. We also found metal fragments, glass sherds, and other small items. While all of these things whispered clues about the past, the beads and the faunal collection were the most revealing about the events at the Fort Willshire Trade Fairs. They were highly prevalent and their presence seemed to reinforce the importance of these fairs as a regional center of economic change. Not only did the bones and beads represent the major changes due to cultural and economic interaction, but they also provided a glimpse of an ordinary day at Fort Willshire. This chapter presents the archaeological evidence, from beads to fauna and ceramics to metal, and paints a picture of changing lives as a result of trade on the Eastern Cape frontier.

### **The Money, Power, and Cultural Beliefs Imbedded in Beads**

The Fort Willshire Trade Fairs drew in many Xhosa primarily for the bead trade. Glass beads were highly valued commodities. They decorated clothing as marks of prestige, class, social status, and clan affiliation. They often communicated cultural messages, identifying stages of courtship or marriage and stages of life such as circumcision rites of passage. Most importantly, they functioned as monetary equivalents in the indigenous Xhosa economy. They represented currency in the cattle trade and in



the acquisition of other goods and services. They were the currency for the *labola* (the dowry) in marriage contracts and they cemented political alliances (Crais 1992, Peires 1982, Beck 1987). Traders, colonial officials, and missionaries would often bestow on chiefs a collection of glass beads. Xhosa commoners would pay tribute or taxes in the form of beads to their local chiefs. For all these reasons and the fact that the majority of my archaeological collection consisted of glass beads, I considered glass beads a significant indicator of specific trade events, economic transactions, and cultural interaction at the Fort Willshire Trade Fairs.

This evidence was particularly important since, unlike other regions, previous archaeological research in the Eastern Cape has uncovered little information about beads. Major sites in various areas of southern Africa provide substantial bead collections for understanding European contact with indigenous communities. Sharma Saitowitz (1996:174) points out the contributions of tightly dated sites such as Thulamela (AD 1600) in the northern Transvaal, the Zulu capital at Mgungundlovu (1829-1879), and a Tswana site in Thabazimbi in the southwest of Transvaal (AD 1872-1879). Despite the documented importance of beads in the Eastern Cape however, only small collections have been discovered from rock shelters (Saitowitz and Sampson 1992, Deacon 1976, Derricourt 1977). The archaeological evidence so far has failed to indicate that beads played a major role in the Eastern Cape economy. Carol Kaufmann (1994) argues that in this region, archaeology tells us virtually nothing about glass beads.

Historical sources confirm a widening distribution of European trade beads in the eastern Cape from the early nineteenth century. Unfortunately, the archaeological records do not support this documentary evidence (Kaufmann 1994:48).

The bead collection from the Fort Willshire project changes the history of archaeology in this region, confirms the historical documents, and for the first time draws

out new insights about their role in Eastern Cape trade relations. They reveal details about the spatial distribution of economic transactions and certain trade events at the fairs. At Fort Willshire, I found the first substantial archaeological collection of glass beads in the entire Eastern Cape. The collection included 3521 beads, 1642 of which were associated with a horn core deposit in the trade fair grounds (see figure 6.3).

The preponderance of beads revealed that beads were an essential element of trade at Fort Willshire and within the changing local economy. Along with the faunal collection, beads dominated the archaeological assemblage thus revealing their importance to the interpretation of the site. While the beads in themselves commented about the global exchange network surrounding the Xhosa, their distribution throughout the site provided specific insights about their role at the Fort Willshire fairs.

The collection of beads taken from a tightly controlled area within a 5 meter x 5 meter grid over the trade fair landscape clearly defined the boundaries of the trade fair area. In addition, they highlighted specific areas of intensified bead trade and perhaps all major areas of formalized trade. An analysis of these beads revealed a large percentage of monochrome seed beads.



Figure 7.1: Monochrome Seed Beads

The majority of the beads were either blue or white, which suggests that individuals used these colors to mark their affiliation with the Ngqika Xhosa chiefdom

(see Table 7.1).<sup>1</sup> They indicate that blue and white beads dominated the bead trade, and therefore either the British seldom had other colors in their supply or the Xhosa were eager to buy only those particular beads. Since the written record indicates that British traders often controlled the fluctuation of bead values, it seems likely that the British controlled the distribution of various colors. At the same time, in order to keep the fairs a success the British had to match the desires of Xhosa traders.

Table 7.1 Counts of Colored Glass Seed Beads (n=3521)

Color	Number	Percent
Blue	104	18.87
Black	1	0.18
Dark Turquoise	1	0.18
Green	1	0.18
Gray	1	0.18
Lavender/Pinkish Purple	4	0.73
Light Turquoise	4	0.73
Pink	43	7.80
Purple	1	0.18
Royal Blue	102	18.51
Red	3	0.54
Red with White Interior	1	0.18
Turquoise	12	2.18
White	261	47.37
White with Blue Dots	2	0.36
White with Blue and Red Stripes	2	0.36
White with Red Stripes	1	0.18
White with Red Swirly Stripes	2	0.36
White with Red and Blue Stripes	2	0.36
White with Red Stripes	1	0.18
Yellow	2	0.36

The preponderance of glass seed beads, the lack of more elaborately decorated beads, and the absence of certain types of beads made from other materials reveal the

<sup>1</sup> Bead colors were identified and analyzed under a microscope to prevent problems due to patination. Many of the beads were covered with a white patination that masked other colors and decorations. A small

The preponderance of glass seed beads, the lack of more elaborately decorated beads, and the absence of certain types of beads made from other materials reveal the nature of the market. They represent which countries controlled production, and which colonial powers dominated distribution, the value of the beads, or the demand of the beads themselves. They also represent the demand of indigenous traders and the types of European goods incorporated into Xhosa society. The events in Europe and the rest of the world had a significant impact on the global bead market, which in turn made an impact on indigenous material culture. The written record identifies the British as the major colonial participants of the Fort Willshire Trade Fairs and the primary distributors of glass beads in the region. The archaeological record fills in the details of the specific events surrounding this trade.

To understand the complexity of the bead trade network and its extension into the Eastern Cape, we must understand the development of bead trade within a global framework. Saitowitz (1996) observes that at most Iron Age sites in southern Africa, glass beads are rarely found prior to AD 800. Their appearance at southern African sites seems to correspond with the period when the Fatimids ruled Egypt from Cairo (AD 969-1171). During this time, Muslim trade and commerce expanded and glass workers perfected the techniques of early Islamic glassmaking. Archaeologists believe that most of the beads found at these early sites were manufactured in India and distributed by Muslim traders in the Indian Ocean. The goal was to build regular trade routes between India, China, and Africa.

Since the bead trade into Africa existed long before the nineteenth century, it is necessary to question why the Xhosa latched onto specific European glass seed beads

production in Europe as well as other parts of the world, and the availability of alternative bead trade routes into the Eastern Cape form a foundation for understanding how the British were able to manipulate the market value of beads for a brief moment during the duration of the Fort Willshire Trade Fairs.

### **History of the African Glass Bead Trade**

An extensive bead trade network existed in the world by the time the British came to trade with the Xhosa in the Eastern Cape. Instead of establishing new economic links with the Xhosa, they tried to control pre-existing trade routes, centralize trade, and monopolize material distribution. Their strategy was to identify local demands of foreign products while limiting the costs acquired to meet these demands. Their goal was in line with most colonial traders traveling around the world.

For Europeans, whose aim was to maintain maximum profits with a minimum commitment of manpower and resources, glass beads, exchanged for American furs or African ivory, gold, and slaves, yielded enormous margins – 1,000 percent was the return on investment, according to a report in 1632 – and thus became a central part of international trade patterns (Dubin 1987:106).

The success of the bead trade at Fort Willshire was predicated on identifying local Xhosa tastes and responding with the appropriate types of beads.

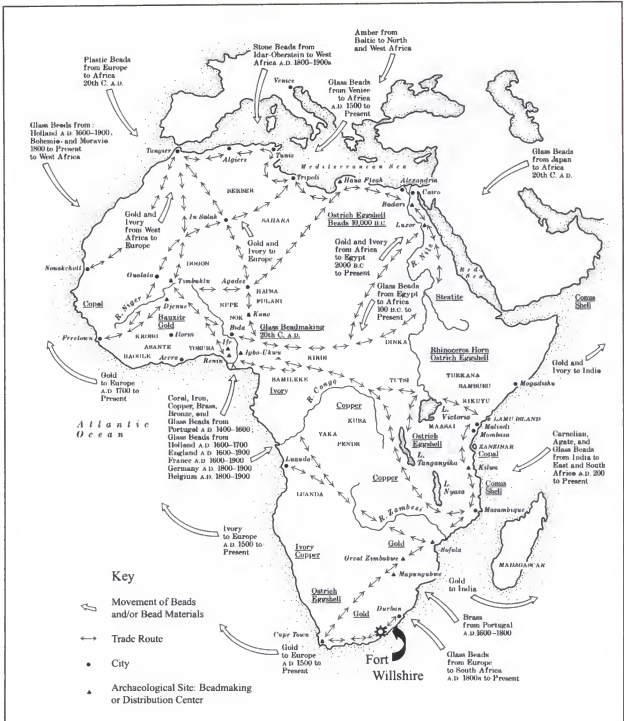


Figure 7.2 Distribution of Beads and Bead Material Into Africa  
Dubin, L.S. 1987 *The History of Beads from 30,000 B.C. to the Present*.  
New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc.

The majority of beads found in the Keiskamma River Valley were glass seed beads. At the time, most glass beads were made in Europe. The primary manufacturers included those in Venice, Holland, Bohemia and Moravia.<sup>2</sup> Venice was the earliest and most-well known center of production. It rapidly developed once the western Asian industries closed down.

In 1401, Tamerlane's Mongol armies defeated Damascus, Tyre, Aleppo, and Sidon. In light of this new political situation, Asians saw the end of their monopoly over the glass bead-making market. This downfall signaled the rise of Venetian glass makers (Dubin 1987).

The Venetians dominated the world market in terms of the amount of beads produced, the level of quality, and the range of diversity. They supplied the markets in Africa, Southeast Asia, and other areas that had been supplied by India for centuries. Although the Venetians had a near-monopoly on the glass bead market in the eighteenth century, it was almost impossible for them to isolate themselves from competitors.

The Bohemians, Moravians and the Dutch eventually built bead industries that rivaled the success of the Venetians. Producers had been making beads in Bohemia and Moravia since the tenth century. It was not until the seventeenth century that they learned the secret techniques of Venetian craftsmen. With this information, they began to enter the global bead trade network, and by the eighteenth century, they were sending their beads all over the world. These industries achieved success by imitating beads and a wide variety of bead materials as well as developing their own distinct styles.

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<sup>2</sup> Bohemia and Moravia were provinces of the former Czechoslovakia, today referred to as the Czech Republic and Slavakia.

While some of their beads shared similarities with Venetian manufactured beads, others were relatively unique. The Moravians and Bohemians would use distinct methods including blown, mandrel pressed, and prosser molded techniques. In the nineteenth century, they could copy Indian agates, carnelians, and other African beads made of cowrie shells, bone, and bauxite. In turn, they traded these glass copies back to Africa. Dubin (1987) notes,

The economics of this are fascinating, since the glass reproductions could apparently be manufactured and distributed more cheaply than beads made of the original and sometimes inexpensive, natural materials (112).

Like the Moravians and Bohemians, the Dutch learned the secrets of Venetian glass bead producers. The history of the glass bead making industry in Holland related directly to the history of Venetian glass producing companies. In 1550, Venetian glass makers moved from Murano to work in Holland. By 1580, there was a developing industry in sections of Amsterdam, including Waterloo and the old Jewish quarter. By 1600 to 1750, these beads found their way into the hands of explorers and merchants who traveled to North America, South and West Africa, and Indonesia.

The Dutch produced glass beads by both drawn and wound techniques (discussed later in this chapter). They made distinctive bead types such as monochromes in white, amber, brick red and blue. They made chevron beads and drawn beads that were striped blue and white. Dubin (1987) claims that although the Dutch bead making industry was short lived, it was extremely active in the global bead market.

Like the Dutch, the Germans were also successful glass bead producers. They supplied the royal courts in various areas of Europe, India, and Africa. Their agate bead production saw tremendous success particularly in Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Idar-Oberstein became a major center for the production of stone



beads. Between 1830 and 1980, over 100 million stone beads were sent to Africa, which undermined the agate and carnelian supplies from India (Dubin 1987:113-114).

The British were primarily carriers and traders. There is no evidence that they produced beads for export (Dubin 1987). Instead, English traders obtained their supplies from other parts of Europe. By the 1800s, they also collected beads from China.

For the Fort Willshire Trade Fairs, this meant that glass beads supplied by the British most likely came from Dutch supply ships or directly from the Venetians, Bohemians, and Moravians in Europe. Peires (1982) claims that the most highly prized beads at the fairs originated from Italy. Since these centers manufactured beads and supplied the world for over 300 years, it is likely that the Fort Willshire beads were made in any one of these cities.

Before European colonial contact with Africa and Southeast Asia, India controlled trade routes that were in existence since before the Christian era (Saitowitz 1996, Dubin 1987). The success of European production and the acceptance of European beads amongst African consumers had a serious effect on India. Indian industries particularly suffered as a result of German stone and European glass bead production. Yet, despite outside influence, before European contact:

An enormous range of beads and raw materials for beads has been available to Africans for centuries (Dubin 1987:122).

The earliest known beads in Africa were made of natural materials, such as seeds, nuts, shells, bones, tusks, and teeth. In Libya, archaeologists discovered ostrich eggshell beads from Upper Paleolithic (10,000 BC) sites and in Sudan they found similar beads in slightly later Neolithic sites. Currently, ostrich eggshells are still made by the !Kung San in the Kalahari desert. The Nok people of Nigeria made double-drilled stone beads in the

1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC. Today, granite beads are made by the Dogon of Mali. Arab and Sudanic traders brought agate, carnelian, red jasper, and old stone beads to Ilorin.

Most agate and carnelian beads found throughout Africa today, however, are either of Indian origin or are copies designed to imitate Indian beads that were made in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by German manufacturers at Idar-Oberstein (Dubin 1987:124).

Metal beads are also found in parts of Africa. Archaeologists found tin beads at the Nok site in the first millennium BC. Iron beads were found in Kenya. Silver beads are made in Ethiopia. Gold beads were made by the Asante in West Africa as early as the fifteenth century (Dubin 1987). Such adornments found throughout Africa are an indication of African bead use before the British brought glass beads to Fort Willshire. The tradition of bead making in Africa existed long before European contact.

Although various types of beads were already in use throughout Africa, it was the trade of European glass beads that played an important role in the struggle between European powers for control of sub-Saharan African people (Dubin 1987). As revealed by the evidence found at Fort Willshire, the English copied other European powers in their use of material goods to draw in the South African indigenous population. They used glass beads to entice the Xhosa into a European economy.

Traders established glass beads as a means of currency in Africa early on. In South Africa, one of the earliest sources of indigenous glass beads was Mapungubwe (ca. 1050-1270 AD), a site located on the confluence of the Sashi and Limpopo Rivers and considered by some as the capital of southern Africa's first state. Crafters made beads here from 600 to 1200 AD. Since the sixteenth century, traders brought glass beads produced in Europe to Africa as well as the New World, India, and China (Kaufman 1993). Saitowitz (1993) claims that the growth of circulation of glass beads followed

expansion of world trade. Most glass beads arrived in southern Africa after European contact. While most of these beads were manufactured in Venice, others came from Holland, Germany, and Italian controlled factories in France and Bohemia.

Glass beads first entered South Africa, and particularly the Eastern Cape, from early ports in Delagoa Bay and Cape Town. Later, ports were established in Durban and East London. The key to success for these European traders was determined by their ability to match indigenous desires and capture the market. Various producers thus imitated popular colors and types by using specific manufacturing techniques.

### **Manufacturing Techniques of Glass Seed Beads**

In the nineteenth century, the most common types of beads in the Eastern Cape were small monochrome drawn beads (Kaufman 1993). These types of beads were commonly called pound, embroidery, or seed beads because of their small size, which ranged from 0 mm to 2 mm (Deagan 1987). The term embroidery referred to their function. They were often used to decorate clothing.

Drawn beads were made out of two rods that were attached to a hollow gather of molten glass. Two people would pull on the rods while walking in opposite directions along a corridor. As they pulled, they would create a long hollow tube that would be cut into specific lengths of beads. The last steps were to round the beads with heat, polish them, and finally sort them.

If the manufacturers wanted to create stripes on the beads, they attached smaller rods of glass to the bead. If they wanted to create a multi-layered effect for polychrome or other such decorated beads, they would roll the original bubble sequentially in different colors of glass.

Slight variations in manufacturing techniques could create a bead that was more valuable, prestigious, and exclusive. Differences in beads could create differences in symbolic representations. Manufacturing techniques are thus important because they create the colors, decorations, and various characteristics of beads that contribute to the meaning embedded in cultural traditions.

### **The Meaning Behind The Beads**

The beads found at Fort Willshire and the Keiskamma River Valley are important expressions of culture. Since they represent money, social position, power, ideology, identity, religion, and global networks, they offer the information needed to form comprehensive explanations of culture change. They allow us to consider material and symbolic causes behind the changes within Xhosa life as well as their relationships with their British counterparts. Most importantly, beads help explain how the British were able to exploit material demands and their knowledge of indigenous systems to coerce the Xhosa into dependence on the colonial economy. As different Xhosa factions competed against each other for economic and political control, they gave up the advantage of an alliance against colonial domination.

The bead trade network established by the British in the Eastern Cape was a mirror of bead production in Europe, a reflection of bead trade in other parts of the world, and a derivation of other types of indigenous trade throughout Africa. The British were able to exploit the pre-established trade networks, the ingrained symbolic and cultural values of items of adornment, and a need for easily transportable monetary equivalents.

Peires (1982) notes that:

Since trading cattle for beads or copper was trading one form of currency for another, Xhosa trade was not primarily the exchange of one use-value for another use-value but a form of financial speculation (96).

The value of beads depended on their value in terms of cattle and their rarity, rather than on their intrinsic value. At Fort Willshire, British traders could thus manipulate the value of beads by controlling their rate of distribution. This often caused the value of beads to dramatically fluctuate.

Settler traders, who were unloading beads onto the market much faster than Xhosa traders could disperse them, blamed the Xhosa for the fickleness of their taste without realising that they themselves were responsible for it. Since settler traders were sometimes reduced to bankruptcy by sudden changes in the bead market, it is probable that this also occurred among the more under-capitalised Xhosa traders (Peires 1982:101).

Despite their fluctuation in value and the inevitable close of the fairs due to over-saturation of beads, the bead trade was the heart and success of the fairs. Colonial traders used them to attract Xhosa traders.

### **The Diet, Resources, and Cultural Beliefs Imbedded in Bones**

While traders came to the fairs to exploit the economic benefits, they socially interacted with each other, ate, drank, and lived everyday lives as the fairs took place. Although the written record provides general descriptions of the fairs, it overlooks some details. The faunal collection fills in a few of these pictures, such as the diet of the traders and to what extent they relied on the local environment.

In this section, I describe the collected fauna and outline their taphonomic history, including descriptions of cultural modifications on the bones, weathering, and animal damage. The faunal collection consists of 655 analyzed specimens that provide information about colonial diet, trade practices, and patterns of settlement on the

landscape. This evidence also offers insight about the extent of cultural interaction, economic strategies people used to adapt to their changing environment, and how people reacted symbolically when they saw new and different cultural practices.

The origins of each represented animal and how they most likely arrived in the Eastern Cape of South Africa suggest insights about trade routes, strategies of breeding due to cultural interaction, and global influences on cultural and biological change. By revealing the diet of traders and the ways they process their meat, the faunal collection most importantly reveals the details of everyday life for both the colonial and indigenous traders.

I found dense concentrations of faunal material in three sections of my study area. One of these areas clearly represented an activity associated with a specialized skill such as tanning, ritual activity associated with economic exchanges, or simply trade activity. In this area, I found a dense layer of cattle horn cores with very few other types of bones. They were associated with a large collection of glass seed beads (see Chapter 4).

The other two areas of concentrated fauna represent either the kitchen dump of Fort Willshire occupants or the temporary settlement of colonial traders. It is possible that the British occupants of the fort left the remains, because the bone fragments are located close to remnants of a brick oven within the fort. A historical drawing however depicts this area as the wagon area of colonial traders (see figure 3.1). In addition, multiple ash layers and specific types of artifacts found in association with the fauna suggest that in this area people were sitting around fire pits eating their dinners.

### Horn Cores and Beads

This feature most likely reveals significant insights about economic and subsistence practices, different worldviews colliding, and the nature of trade and craft traditions at Fort Willshire. In the trade fair area and approximately 35 meters east of the of the fort wall, I found 113 faunal remains, of which 109 were cattle horn cores. The other fauna consisted of a scapula, a humerus, and a typannic associated with a cranium. I also found the shaft piece of a radius, which seemed related to one of the horn cores. The horn cores were found with 1642 glass beads (discussed earlier in this chapter). After uncovering four 1 meter x 1 meter excavation units, it seemed clear that at least half of the feature was still underground.



Figure 7.3 Horn Core Activity Area

A symbol of trade, economic exchange, and cultural interaction, this activity area seemed to represent indigenous responses to colonial industries. Using comparative cases, it was relatively clear that this area represented the disposal area of a specialized

crafts person who worked with horn. When I considered the horn cores apart from the beads, I noticed the similarity between the site and specialized craft sites in Europe.

In Switzerland, 166 goat horn cores were found on the bank of the Birsig River at a medieval industrial waste site (Schmid 1972). The site was interpreted as a dump of a specialized tanner who worked with horns. Goat hides were delivered to this tanner with the horns still attached to their skins. After skinning the animal, the tanner would cut the horn cores from the skull and discard them. When archaeologists discovered the site, they found the horn cores lying next to rotted tanbark waste or tannery waste. They subsequently interpreted the deposit as a product of the tanning process.

On a similar site, a collection of 207 oxen horn cores was found in a cellar of Insula 31 (Schmid 1972). One hundred and thirty five of them were concentrated in one area of the cellar floor. All others were scattered over the floor in the fill. On the horn cores, cutting traces were found at the points of attachment. This evidence suggests that the horns were loosened with a knife to remove them. The horn cores themselves were the waste product of a crafter who worked with horn.



Figure 7.4 Horn Core Deposit

Schmid, E. 1972. *Atlas of Animal Bones*. New York: Elsevier Publishing Co.



In general, horns were frequently worked into trumpets, drinking horns, or carrying vessels. When manufacturing these goods, the crafter would saw off the horn with the horn core still in it to provide the necessary stability for sawing. Similar modern practices offer ethnographic models.

In Europe, often the worker in horn would remove the cores by soaking, cutting or sawing, and pulling. The cores would then be discarded either amongst the general urban refuse or altogether in one collection of debris. Urban site archaeologists in Europe regularly discover deposits of horn cores. Most of these belong to cattle but sometimes there is a fairly high proportion of goat (Armitage and Clutton-Brock 1976:329). Without finding the easily decomposed horns themselves, we can use horn cores as evidence of manufacturing on site (Schmid 1968:48). The horn cores represent a specific handicraft.

In the same way, the horn cores at Fort Willshire represent specialized work with horns. It seems reasonable to envision the Xhosa traders carrying the horns still attached to hides as they crossed the dangerous Keiskamma River. Once they arrived at Fort Willshire and started trading, colonial specialists would immediately prepare the horns on the trade fair grounds.

The complexity of this area arises when we consider the large quantity of beads relative to the rest of the site. It is possible that as British traders discarded the horn cores, they accidentally dropped trade beads onto the refuse or that Xhosa traders themselves accidentally dropped beads as they traded their skins and horns. Since the faunal remains are representative of refuse, the beads may also be interpreted as a product

of disposal. An alternative explanation is that the large quantities of beads in association with many horn cores symbolize a ritual process.

If this deposit of horn cores and beads represents the area in which the actual exchanges took place, we could expect to find large amounts of beads in the deposit. Once the British traders inspected Xhosa goods, they would lay an opening offer of beads on the ground. A bunch of beads was about 7 inches long and weighed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a pound to 2 pounds each. The beads in this area had diameters ranging from 0.8 mm to 3.2 mm, with a large percentage of the beads falling between 1.5 mm to 2.2 mm.

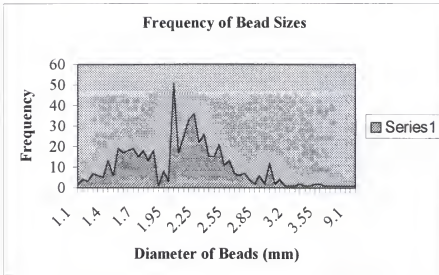


Figure 7.5 Frequencies of Beads by Diameter (n=500)

The above chart shows the frequencies of beads by diameter for a sample of the entire Fort Willshire bead collection. A sample of 500 beads was measured to determine average diameter size. Although a few beads were over 3 mm in size, the majority of the sample ranged between 1.95 mm and 2.5 mm. Considering their relative tiny size, it is reasonable to see a large percentage of them entire the archaeological record.

Since traders were pushed to finish transactions in a limited amount of time, they were probably rushed to complete exchanges. If a few strands broke in the frenzy, beads would probably enter the archaeological record in larger doses in areas of intense trading. Considering their small size, it would be difficult to recover the majority of the beads.

An alternative, yet just as plausible, explanation would involve the symbolic and economic meanings behind beads, which relate to indigenous responses to their changing views of cattle. Many Xhosa traditions, such as *isivivane*, are based on appeasing the ancestors (see Chapter 5). In several instances, the Xhosa believe that economic success, health, and the well being of their people are based on the happiness and approval of the ancestors.

Perhaps the high percentage of beads found in association with the horn cores symbolizes their offerings to the ancestors as they traded cattle products to the colonial traders. The Xhosa were reluctant to slaughter cattle on a daily basis. Cattle were signs of wealth, political status, social networks, and economic transactions. Most of the time, the Xhosa slaughtered their cattle during rituals or in times of stress due to diseases or drought.

To exploit the high demand for horns and skins presented by the trade fairs, the Xhosa probably saw their chance to accumulate more wealth in beads by slaughtering rather than trading cattle for commercial purposes. In traditional ceremonies, the horns are tied to a pole in the center of the kraal as a token to the ancestors. By trading the horns away, traders perhaps felt as if they were defying the wishes of the ancestors. With this change in their economic system, the violent tension throughout the frontier, and the other natural disasters facing them, the Xhosa perhaps felt the need to pay tribute to the

ancestors immediately during certain transactions at the fairs. One of these moments most likely would have been the trade in horns and skins. Perhaps they threw a few beads on the deposit as a gesture to the ancestors. Regardless of the ideological implications of this refuse spot, it is clear that cattle were intimately intertwined economically and culturally with beads and that this relationship was central to the success of the fairs.

Cattle, their development, and how they moved across the landscape was reflective of cultural and economic interactions at Fort Willshire as well as both regional and international relations. Tracing the history of cattle corresponds with the history of colonial and indigenous contact and the degrees of influence each had on each other.

The Xhosa owned the last remnants of Sanga cattle found in the Eastern Cape (Epstein 1971). These cattle were mixed breeds that had intermingled with cattle of European origin. Considering the history of cattle theft on both indigenous and colonial sides, it is not surprising that a breed developed indistinguishable from any of the purely indigenous cattle of the Cape, Orange Free State, and the Southern Transvaal (Curson and Thornton 1936, Epstein 1971).

The Sanga cattle appeared in East Africa before the short horned Zebu cattle. From Ethiopia, they made their way down through the lake district in East Africa, spread throughout Africa south of the Sahara, and arrived in Southwest Africa. By 1890, many suffered from the epidemic of rinderpest and their numbers decreased immensely.

The Sanga cattle are characteristically similar to Nguni cattle (Epstein 1971). They have a convex head profile. Most of them are humped and vary in size. Their horns come in many sizes, have various basil girths, and grow in different directions.

There are two types of horned breeds, including those with long slender horns and those with gigantic horns with great basal circumferences.

In comparison, the “Ama-Xosa” cattle have long legs, flat barrels, and long horns. Their horns have various curves and sometimes are devoid of their cores. These cattle are usually poor in meat and milk potentialities. The Xhosa use them mainly for religious purposes, to transport goods, and as symbols of accumulated wealth. Xhosa cattle represent the degree of interaction that had taken place between Europeans and the indigenous people of South Africa. By the time of the Fort Willshire Trade Fairs, ones reflecting both cultures had replaced purely indigenous breeds.

### **The Wagon Area**

Unlike the horn core and beads activity area, which reflected trade and interaction, the wagon area reflected how a temporary trade environment and relations with local people affected colonial traders. Originally, I questioned whether this area represented a kitchen dump associated with the British soldiers or remnants left by the traders. Excavations indicated that a large midden in this area lay close to the remains of a brick oven in the fort’s kitchen. Historical drawings of the trade fairs however revealed lines of parked wagons over the same area (see figure 3.1).

Apart from indications of burning on the remains, the characteristics of the faunal assemblage seemed to support both interpretations. Characteristic modifications on the faunal collection indicated economic patterns related to consumption and subsistence practices. Much of the fauna had cut marks, scrapes, chops, or evidence of sawing (see Table 7.2). Most of the collection also consisted of domestic bovids and little evidence indicated use of wild game.

While this evidence revealed insights about processing and diet, the context of the findings identified the people who discarded the bones. Since most of the collection was found in layers of ash and many of the fragments exhibited burnt marks, the remains seemed to be left by the Fort Willshire traders. In historical diaries, people described seeing the radiant fires of traders mark the landscape. The presence of select choice cuts and the absence of various skeletal elements suggested temporary occupation of the area, status of traders, and trade for preferred pieces. The limited variety of fauna suggested a separate location for slaughtering.

While all of these explanations are possible, the collection could alternatively signify a sample too small to be an accurate representation of the area. Although more testing could rule out these possibilities, I made preliminary inferences based on the recovered material. The faunal collection in this area was particularly significant because it revealed insights about the colonial traders, their everyday lives, and how they managed in this particular frontier setting. The remains revealed what these people were eating, the social interaction surrounding their meals, and the extent of their reliance on food supplies from Grahamstown or local Xhosa traders. The remains found in this area also corresponded with periodic short-term occupation. Most likely, traders were bringing in just enough food from Grahamstown to last the duration of the fair and they were supplementing this supply with choice pieces purchased from local vendors.

The schedule of the fairs had a direct effect on their diet, the ways they acquired protein, and the extent to which they used their immediate natural environment. While traders probably exchanged some goods for food that they ate during the duration of the fairs, they most likely concentrated on obtaining more valuable commodities such as

ivory and skins. The faunal assemblage includes very few representatives of wild game, suggesting that colonial traders did little hunting in the area. This perhaps supports the claim that the deposit was indeed representative of the parked wagon area and not a kitchen dump associated with the more permanent occupants.

The soldiers of the fort would have had more time and armed protection to take advantage of the local resources. Given the political and social tension on the frontier apart from the fairs, the traders would probably have arrived at the fairs, traded their goods, returned to Grahamstown, and done little else besides sit around the night fires. They would have considered it dangerous to hunt beyond the comfortable protected proximity of the fort.

### **A Trader's Diet**

The faunal material from the parked wagon area indicated that traders relied heavily on domestic bovids in their diet. Like the Xhosa, colonial people relied on cattle, sheep, and goat. During Derricourt's investigation, he found evidence at Fort Willshire that opened a small window suggesting the presence of sheep and goat (1977:272). Since the parked wagon collection from my study was larger and more comprehensive, it not only confirmed Derricourt's earlier findings, but it led to new insights.

We counted and weighed all of the identifiable bones, and only weighed small unidentifiable bones. When it was difficult to identify with certainty the bone pieces, I divided the collection into broader taxonomic categories. Bovid classes were based on four size categories (see Chapter 6). Sheep, goat, and Bovid II classes comprised the largest portion of the faunal collection. Cattle (*Bos taurus*), Bovid III, and Bovid III/IV classes comprised the second largest portion. The rest of the collection included single

individual representatives or small groups of individual species. These faunal samples fell into Bovid I and Bovid I/II classes.

The composition of the faunal collection, including mostly cattle, sheep, and goat, was similar to a collection from another European fort in the Eastern Cape. Derricourt (1977:271-272) published lists of his faunal collections from Fort Hare, sites 689 and 690, and Fort Willshire, site 700. Like his collection and my subsequently larger collection from Fort Willshire, the Fort Hare collection consisted of cattle, sheep, and goat. The fauna from Fort Hare consisted mostly of cattle, yet included small to medium bovids that were probably sheep and/or goat.

In addition to the identification of each taxon at Fort Willshire, I recorded the skeletal element and assigned a percentage to the size of the portion. When possible, I recorded the sex of the individual, left or right orientation, proximal or distal ends, and fused parts. I also analyzed the marks on the bones to gain insight on how the bones were processed, used, and discarded.

While I easily identified chopped and sawed marks with the naked eye, I often needed a stereobinocular microscope to find cut and scrape marks. Fitted on the microscope was a high intensity light. Under 20x - 40x magnification, I could easily examine faint, unusual, and clustered marks or modifications. The microscope also helped identify non-human marks such as carnivore tooth scars or damage caused by gnawing or chewing. Carnivore modifications most likely represented the presence of dogs.

I recorded fifteen categories of bone damage (see Table 7.2). To determine the behavior of local traders, I needed to distinguish the marks produced by non-humans.



Four of the categories described bone damage caused by non-humans. Gnawing was marked as "Gnw", and referred to damage caused by rodents such as porcupines. Tooth marks and scars were defined as bite marks and recorded as "Bit". These scars often occur on long bone shafts as well as articular ends. Chew marks were represented by "Chw" and identified when the natural contour of the bone had been remodeled or removed. The bitten category was a better reflection of feeding by the primary predators than the chewed category. Evidence of chewing on large medium and large bovid bones are often attributable to hyenas. Marks created by a tooth marked non-human carnivore were documented by "Tth".

Other bone categories also described the how traders processed their food. I recorded chopped, scraped, sawed, and cut remains. The category "Cut" was a general category that referred to bones bearing any kind of butchering marks. In this group, I included those fragments with small cut marks, chop marks, and evidence of scraping.

Table 7.2 Abbreviations Indicating Categories of Bone Damage  
Expanded from Richard Milo's 5 Categories of Bone Damage

Tth	Non-human carnivore.
Chw	Chewed – Bones on which natural contour has been remodeled or removed.
Bit	Bitten – Tooth marks and tooth scars; Occurs on long bone shafts as well as articular ends and is a better reflection of feeding by the primary predators than the chewed category.
Cut	Butchering Marks – Including cut marks, chop marks, scraping marks
Hit	Struck Bones – Features of deliberate breaking for the purpose of extracting bone marrow; Including a blow or crushed.
Gnw	Gnawed – Rodent marks (i.e. Porcupine).
Chd	Chopped or hacked – axe marks.
Scp	Scraped
Swd	Sawed
Bnt	Burnt
Wrk	Worked
Red	Root-etched (decalcification)
Wth	Weathering (i.e. split-lined cracking, pitting, flaking, soil stains)
Pol	Polished
Otr	Other – described.

Given the types of marks on the bones and the types of bones themselves, I considered the faunal collection to represent the diet of the traders. The faunal remains indicated that the traders lived on particular cuts of cattle, sheep, and goat and that they processed these cuts in specific ways. The majority of the collection consisted of these animals and many of these bones had scrape or cut marks. In addition, one or two remains of other animals suggested that only on rare occasions did traders kill wild animals and consume non-bovid animals (see Chapter 6). We found evidence of one domestic chicken, *Gallus gallus*. In addition, I found a large part of the sample in layers of different types of ash.

The context of the collection indicates that the bones were being prepared, cooked, and eaten at the place of discard. The traders were probably eating certain pieces of meat that they cooked on the open fire pit and processed by their wagon. Their diet

and eating habits or practices reflect their short periodic visits primarily for the durations of the fairs. The modifications on the bones also indicate that individuals were using small knives in one hand to scrape off bits of meat held by their other hand. While this suggests that many traders probably needed few plates, the ceramic collection indicated that traders did bring a few single plates or bowls.

### **Resources, Social Position, and Cultural Interaction Imbedded in Ceramics**

The ceramic assemblage found at Fort Willshire and in the surrounding areas throughout the Keiskamma River Valley includes European manufactured as well as African manufactured artifacts. Most of the collection was discovered in the wagon area near Fort Willshire and included a high percentage of European fragments in comparison to the low percentage of recovered African pieces. The ceramic assemblage consisted of a variety of types such as British tobacco pipe fragments, British transfer printed pearlwares and white-bodied wares, German stonewares, Chinese porcelains, and unglazed coarse earthenwares or African manufactured ceramic sherds.

The analysis of this collection yielded many interesting insights. The collection contained little Chinese porcelain, no English porcelains, and no tea wares. It consisted mostly of blue and white decorated plate fragments. The majority of the assemblage included commercial pieces, and a good sample of industrial or factory-made slipwares, including mochawares, annularwares, and wormy finger-painted wares. Many hand painted pearlwares and white-bodied wares also filled the deposits. Consistent with the time frame of the site, the hand painted fragments were designed with the "Early Soft Colors" that are a strong indicator of pre-1830 production (Klose 1998, personal interview). A few pieces of creamware were also recovered in the collection.



Figure 7.6 The Early Soft Colors of the White Bodied Wares

According to Jane Klose (1997), most of the nineteenth century European-style coarse earthenware ceramics were manufactured in Europe or the Western Cape. This period was remarkably different from the earlier colonial years in South Africa. The ceramics found on seventeenth century sites were characteristic of wide ranging trade relations between the VOC and Japan, China, India, Persia, other parts of Africa, and Europe. Including Dutch and German coarse earthenwares, Delft tin-glazed tablewares, and Rhenish bellarmine stonewares, they also demonstrated lingering ties between the colonists and Holland. While local manufactures had been producing European-style coarse earthenware since 1665, customers were still obtaining good quality coarse wares from abroad (Klose 1997:11).

Apart from coarse earthenwares, porcelains also represented the imported goods from Europe and Asia. Containing Persian, Japanese, and Chinese porcelain, the first

shipments arrived in the second half of the seventeenth century. Since these supplies only included useful types, colonists bought their more valuable and elite wares through private trade.

Although the VOC constantly tried to monitor and control the porcelain trade, they overlooked the private traders that contributed to the local economy. Colonists placed orders directly with suppliers from the Netherlands and the East, and although illegal, they occasionally bought wares from the passengers and crewmembers from ships on their way to Europe.

By the eighteenth century, the frequency of Asian imports had risen dramatically. Klose (1997) notes that Asian wares can be seen as part of the signature of the Cape's cultural identity. While imported European coarse earthenware practically disappeared, Chinese and Japanese porcelains began to define a mid-eighteenth century Cape assemblage. Around this time, Khoi pottery and other Africa or Asian earthenwares also vanished and European-style coarse earthenwares were all locally manufactured. There is also virtually no evidence of British refined earthenwares (Klose 1997:13).

The nineteenth century saw another major shift in ceramic traditions. Cape collections during this period consisted of blue and color transfer printed wares, undecorated creamwares, annular wares, shell edged plates and a variety of sponge decorated wares (Klose 1997:14). Consisting mostly of bone china tea wares, porcelain frequencies dropped significantly and the ones that did exist in the archaeological record represented European manufacturers. While the frequencies of Asian ceramics also decline, they remained a very small percentage of Cape assemblages.

The collection at Fort Willshire in the Eastern Cape revealed similar trends as those defined from Western Cape nineteenth century sites, yet it also exhibited unique characteristics. While some supplies most likely came from Cape Town and the northern provinces, the majority of ceramics probably came from sets brought over from Europe by the 1820 British Settlers themselves. Bringing one or two plates from their family's collection, traders carried their wares in wagons directly to the fort.

At Fort Willshire, the collection as a whole contributed to the interpretation of specific areas on the landscape. The ceramic assemblage from the parked wagon area exhibited distinct features. Perhaps the most significant characteristic of the collection was that it was highly fragmented. The sherds were so small that it was impossible to determine minimum vessel counts.

While it seems that many South African historical sites produce ceramic collections that provide minimum vessel counts, it is not surprising that ceramic data collected for the Fort Willshire project was too fragmented to produce these particular results. If traders were eating food from their hands and using the one or two plates they brought from home, they would probably save broken plates for use in the field during following trading days. Although more testing would most likely reveal larger fragments associated with the discard of the fort occupants, questions about trade and the traders have elicited evidence about the activity areas reflecting short temporary occupation. This reoccurring picture surfaces again when we consider other artifacts related to consumption. The glass fragments from Fort Willshire highly suggest consumption of alcohol by temporary residents.

### **Liquor on the Landscape and Illegal Trade: Meaning Imbedded in Glass**

The glass collection found at Fort Willshire and the surrounding areas of the Keiskamma River Valley indicated that people were most likely drinking alcohol or spirits and that this was a common activity for both Xhosa and British traders. Although the trade of alcohol was considered illegal, distributions across the landscape suggested that illicit trade occurred quite often despite official regulations.

Apart from glass associated with spirits, few other glass types were present in the collection. Although I found a large percentage of wine bottle glass, I found few other tableware fragments (see Table 7.3). The collection seemed to illustrate temporarily occupied activity areas, social drinking around fire pits in the parked wagon area, and various other areas of casual drinking. In some of the Xhosa locations, I found scatters of European manufactured wine bottle glass associated with no other artifacts. In general, the glass assemblage seemed to lack any evidence of permanent settlement.

Table 7.3 Frequencies of Identified Glass Categories

Type Name	Frequency
Bottle	202
bottle, possible case bottle	1
case bottle	1
Container	87
Flat	82
flat, possible case bottle	1
Indeterminate container	2
Tableware	1
(UID) unidentified fragment	11
undiagnostic container	7
wine bottle	141
wine bottle/possible case bottle	1
Total	537

By analyzing the distribution of the glass collection, I was able to identify nineteenth century Xhosa activity areas, interpret areas of possible illegal trade, and define areas related to trade but separate from the trade fairs themselves. While the glass collection was comparatively smaller than the bead assemblage, the faunal remains, and the sample of ceramic sherds, it still provided distinct patterns seen through the clusters of different characteristics.

The collection included a total of 537 glass fragments, and consisted of a variety of different colors. I found pieces of various shades of green, light blue green, brown, white, and colorless. Some were too patinated to identify color. The function of the glass fragments fell into categories including bottle, container, flat, tableware, and unidentified or non-diagnostic fragments.

Scattered in different areas of Ngcabasa yaseNtilini, I discovered various pieces of dark green, bottle glass manufactured in the nineteenth century. This particular type of



glass is significant because most of the time they were used to carry wine or other spirits. In addition, while complex temporal assemblages marked most of the sites on the Xhosa side, isolated wine bottle glass defined a few discrete nineteenth century activity areas. This is consistent with a picture of traders temporarily spending one or two nights in the area camping under the night sky with a few pieces of meat and a bottle of brandy or wine.

While official written records indicate that the trade of alcohol was forbidden, travelers observed that alcohol was prevalent and became a problem for many Xhosa. The chiefdoms closest to the colony and the frontier border in particular found alcohol a temptation they could not resist. In 1807, Alberti (1968) observed:

It need hardly be stated that the association of those [Xhosa] living closest to the Colony, with those Colonists, was bound to have a detrimental influence on the habits and way of life of the former, which travelers have unfortunately observed in the case of all uncivilized peoples, with whom Europeans have come into contact. Also amongst this section of [Xhosa] the inclination for alcoholic beverages has spread, amongst other things. They are extremely fond of it and drink to excess when they can lay their hands on it. In the case of those [Xhosa] who were further removed from the frontier, I found, to my delight, that to them the taste of wine and brandy was completely repugnant; what is more, those [Xhosa] gave preference to clear water over a mixture of water with wine or brandy (25).

The archaeological evidence suggests that people surrounding Fort Willshire faced the situation observed by Alberti. In diaries and journals, people claim that Chief Ngqika lost the respect of his people because of his unquenchable desire for alcohol. He would do anything for it. Bribed with alcohol and other material benefits, he was probably easily swayed to relinquish his authority as an autonomous leader. Towards the end of the fairs, Chief Ngqika died from alcoholism. Perhaps illicit trade in alcohol was another attempt by the British to co-opt the Xhosa and force them to comply with

colonial objectives. Despite the objectives of the fairs, the alcohol trade flourished and was used as another tool to draw the Xhosa into a colonial system.

### **Smelting, Miscellaneous Things, and Identity: Meanings Imbedded in the Metal**

While beads, faunal, glass and ceramics provided significant data for interpreting threads of meaning imbedded in the trade fairs and throughout trade in the region, other artifacts commented about the ordinary yet overlooked activities that occurred around the fairs. Although the majority of metal artifacts were undiagnostic, a few provided details that illustrated specific everyday events on the frontier border.

A variety of metal artifacts were found around Fort Willshire and throughout Ngcabasa. The collection included 792 metal artifacts, mostly consisting of miscellaneous non-diagnostic iron metal fragments with a few distinctive items that revealed significant insight. While some fragments symbolized Xhosa identity and colonial fashions, others represented consumption practices or building and hardware materials.

The entire collection consisted of a variety of items such as buttons, snaps, and hooks. It also included an iron horse shoe fragment, barbed wire, and buckles. The largest category apart from small undiagnostic miscellaneous fragments included a variety of different types of nails such as hand wrought nails, cross section squared nails, and miscellaneous nail fragments. Many of these were found during surface collections in areas marked by brick walls and foundations located outside the fort (see Chapter 5).

In the parked wagon area, we found a number of utensils, including a fork with a bone handle and a knife (see figure 7.7).



Figure 7.7 Iron and Bone Utensils

Unlike the frequencies of ceramic sherds and glass tableware fragments, the regular occurrences of metal utensils seemed to symbolize the temporary care package that traders carried from home to the forts. While sets of plates and fancy glasses would have been cumbersome in the field, a set of utensils would have proved useful for fireside dinners near the parked wagons. Scraping marks on many of the faunal remains illustrated the use of knives for cutting small bites of meat.

Other artifacts were the symbols of home for the occupants of the fort. We discovered a household iron associated with various other domestic remains. Although the iron was found in the parked wagon area, it was located at the bottom of the test unit. This provenience indicates that it was probably linked to the families of the soldiers that lived in the fort before the trade fairs opened.

Apart from domestic tools, buttons were discovered in the trade fair area. Although not as common as beads, buttons probably represent trade as well as an element of colonial clothing.

Travelers suggest that Xhosa traders considered buttons as alternative commodities to beads. The colonial metal collection seemed to represent aspects of clothing, eating practices, and construction materials as in the case of nails.



Figure 7.8 Metal Buttons

While the metal assemblage embodied everyday characteristics of colonial life, it also included significant individual items that represented the Xhosa. I found fragments of a coiled wire bracelet. The Xhosa used to wear coiled bands around their ankles and arms. The sample included in the Fort Willshire collection was identical to another stored in the anthropological type collection at the Albany Museum in Grahamstown, South Africa.

Representing Xhosa identity, colonial home life, and the practical needs of the traders, the metal collection from the Fort Willshire project exhibited the widest variety of types in comparison to the other artifact classes. The broad assortment of metal artifacts is perhaps due to the ability to process metal on the site. Slag found on the surface in Ngcabasa and a tuyere found on the fort side highlighted the differences in technology and resources for these two separate cultures. These artifacts were also a measure of the degree of colonial diffusion within Xhosa society. The slag pieces were small and more representative of a smelting activity area rather than a forging area. Most likely, the Xhosa were melting down metal goods to make other supplies such as weapons. Oral traditions support this interpretation.

The tuyere on the fort side seems to suggest a more extensive process of metal production. While the written record makes no mention of metal processing, forging, or smelting at Fort Willshire, the archaeological evidence seems to suggest otherwise. It is possible that guns and other weapons were manufactured and stored at the fort or in one of the buildings located close to the fort. Chert flakes and prismatic gunflints indicated that weapons were in fact a part of the material culture at the fort. Since the fort was built on the frontier to control tension in the area, soldiers and colonial officials probably prepared for any military encounters.

### **Conclusion**

Apart from the global trade network that the Fort Willshire Trade Fairs were a part of, the traders at Fort Willshire and the Keiskamma River Valley formed a community that fell into a daily routine. Although settled in the area on a periodic temporary basis, colonial traders nevertheless defined the cultural landscape apart from

others in the Fort Willshire community. Arriving from far away areas, the Xhosa also made their mark in the valley and formed a community of indigenous traders. The material record reflects their interaction, the periodic and temporary nature of their settlements, and the activities they experienced while being a part of the fairs.

Through the archaeological assemblage, we can paint a picture of colonial traders eating ribs, drinking brandy, and smoking tobacco. With a chipped plate, fork, and knife in one hand, they would scrape the pieces of meat they were holding in the other. Once they were satisfied they would throw their trash in the fire or let the roaming dog take his share. As they contemplated their expected riches in ivory, skins, and horns, they would glance over to the other side of the river.

Anxiously waiting for the fairs themselves, the Xhosa were probably doing similar things as their colonial counterparts. Drinking their brandy near a warm fire, they would socialize with the other traders and visit with the more permanent settlers of the Ngqika chiefdom. Unlike the British traders, most of them probably traveled by foot. Without wagons, they could not carry much more than their supply of trade goods. If they were lucky, they would pay the tax and stay in one of the settlements of the Ngqika people. Most likely, many of them would rest under a tree for the night. Looking over their goods, they waited in anticipation of getting the most value for them at the famous Fort Willshire Trade Fairs.

The artifacts provide certain details that help us create a more vivid picture of the past. They also present the different realms of data that are needed to form materialist explanations of historical events. From an analysis of the collection, we know that the traders were doing very little hunting, they seldom relied on their immediate environment

for food, and they were bringing in only what they needed to take them through the short duration of the fairs. Traders on both sides rarely if ever fished or used the resources of the river to fulfill their daily nutritional needs. They mostly relied on domestics such as sheep, goat, and cattle.

These insights suggest that the natural resources in the immediate vicinity of the fort were sparse and that despite trade relations, tensions between the British and the Xhosa were still widespread. Since the valley was an integral part of the frontier border, many different factions moved in and out of the area. With the fort occupants and the more settled Ngqika Xhosa depleting the environment, the temporary traders probably lacked the resources and time to depend on wild game. Most likely, they also considered the dangers posed by traders waiting across the river.

Although a wide range of artifacts were found in the Keiskamma River Valley, beads and fauna dominated the collection. While fauna represented both the diet of the traders and trade itself, glass beads revealed the core of the fairs. An equivalent to currency, the beads drew Xhosa traders into a global market and Xhosa goods into the hands of British traders. Representing the economy, the value of beads determined the value of the fairs. Colonial traders manipulated the fluctuation of bead values as a means to control the market. Colonial forces invested in the market to take advantage over certain chiefdoms. The archaeological evidence suggests that the Xhosa were pulled into colonial systems as a result of their ambition for beads. They forsake the autonomy of the Xhosa kingdom as a result of their motivation to take part in a global exchange network. They were drawn to the economic benefits of the Fort Willshire Trade Fairs.

## CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION

For the six years between 1824 and 1830, the British succeeded through the Fort Willshire Trade Fairs in monitoring the transfer of goods and resources back and forth over the frontier border. The fairs allowed them to exploit the resources of the Eastern Cape while politically negotiating with only one chief. Chief Ngqika in turn gained material and political advantages from his monopoly on colonial goods. While the fairs quickly became a conduit for intensified economic and cultural change, they could not entice traders away from illicit and uncontrolled trade. They thus failed to keep trade and interaction indefinitely contained to this one location. Colonial traders flooded the market with beads, sources of local ivory were quickly depleted, and tensions between the British and the Xhosa were manifested within their trade relations. For a number of reasons, the fairs became disadvantageous for both sides.

Xhosa traders from other chiefdoms were forced to pay for accommodations, food, and taxes. By the end of the fairs, they found themselves paying more than three times the original prices for food and supplies. As seen woven throughout the oral traditions, the Keiskamma River presented challenges to their ideological beliefs and posed real physical dangers. To attend the fairs, the Xhosa had to pay tribute to the river people and risk death by crossing deep waters and fast flowing rapids. In addition, sources of ivory had to come from further distances, yet more distant people found it difficult to attend the fairs. For the Xhosa, these factors made visits to the fair more expensive rather than profitable.



In 1830, colonial officials closed down the fairs and legalized trade across the border. Regular stations spread across the Xhosa kingdom and major, more lucrative traders arranged for poor settlers to act as their agents. According to Jeff Peires (1982):

The settler trading network soon eliminated the Xhosa traders by virtue of its more efficient wagon transport and its control over the supply of trade goods. Above all, once the supply of beads was made general throughout Nguni territory their resale value was destroyed. The demand for beads thus dropped from 4576 pounds in 1825 to 287 points in 1831, and was largely replaced by a demand for British manufactures, primarily blankets and iron pots (102).

The Fort Willshire Trade Fairs were the gateway of material goods to the rest of the region, yet once they closed and the gates swung open to the entire Xhosa kingdom, economic fluctuations could not be regulated. The Xhosa lost economic autonomy and thus their insurance against a full imposition of a colonial economic, political, and social system. Once this transition took place, the foundation was set for the coming stage of industrialism and the diamond and gold revolution. The fairs began the reliance of indigenous people on colonial material goods and made them vulnerable to a system of labor that facilitated colonial goals.

To fully understand this process of cultural change and the impact the fairs had on both Xhosa and British traders, archaeologists need to look at the material record. The archaeological evidence from Fort Willshire provides a glimpse at the everyday details that colored the events at the fairs. The specific details provide a more complex picture of the past and provide explanations for why the fairs ceased to continue despite their initial success and enormous impact on the region.

Evidence indicates that there can be no doubt that beads played a major role at the fairs. The insurgence of beads brought about the erosion of well-established spheres of exchange and traditional social hierarchies. In addition, although beads were in high

demand, the British demanded that trade in more-valued items accompany trade of lesser-valued items. Essentially, they tried to collapse different spheres of exchange, regulate their values, equate them with bead prices, and control standardized rates.

Archival sources provide substantial information that supports this interpretation, yet it is the archaeology that defines the actual trade fair area in terms of beads. Beads were found consistently throughout the fair grounds, which is an indication that every trader engaged in the bead trade and that beads were used as a unit of exchange for a variety of other goods.

In addition, the beads found at the fair grounds clustered in specific groups of types and colors, including mostly blue, white, and decorated white. The oral traditions lend credence to the interpretation of these colors as symbolic representations of economic values, ethnic identity, and chiefdom affiliation. By investigating the recovered archaeological data, oral testimony of the past, and archival documents, we can better see the relationship between a global exchange network of beads, the material demands of the region, and how the beads were incorporated into indigenous economic systems and symbolic meanings once they reached the hands of individuals. With these insights, we gain a better understanding about cultural interaction and how two different cultures work together for mutual benefits despite the violent surroundings of the frontier.

From the Fort Willshire evidence, we can also see a culturally divided landscape that was grouped into defined pockets of shared and separated activity areas. The Keiskamma River clearly represented a boundary between Xhosa and British, which was marked by unique archaeological and environmental characteristics. The sites on the fort side presented copious amounts of archaeological data directly related to the fairs and the

nineteenth century, whereas the sites on the Xhosa side of the river offered complex mixed assemblages representing modern occupation as well as an early nineteenth century presence. Due to overgrazing and an absence of environmental management, the vegetation on the Xhosa side was more depleted than the fort side. Since the fort was situated within the Double Drift Game Reserve, the environment on that side revealed the close monitoring of game reserve officials.

Despite the unique landscape characteristics that corresponded to distinct cultural differences in the area, the archaeological material specifically revealed insights about how Xhosa and British traders worked together to obtain benefits through trade and interaction. Through the faunal remains, we observed how the Xhosa in particular used specific handicrafts to maximize profit while minimizing the dangers accrued when transporting goods. A very important aspect of trade at the fairs, skins and horns were transported over the river as whole intact pieces. Considering the dangers of the river, this method perhaps made transportation easier. Once the goods arrived on the trade fair grounds, they were broken down and processed by skilled British artisans.

The Xhosa participated in this system of processing skins and horns since it was a more efficient way of moving goods and it placed the burden of processing the horns onto the British. While the Xhosa accepted the benefits from the horn and skin trade, they most likely considered the mass process of cattle a shock to Xhosa indigenous ideals. They probably felt uneasy about the treatment of sacred cattle in this manner. A small sacrifice of beads over the discarded remains thus would have compensated the ancestors for the violation of indigenous traditions. As the Xhosa watched and participated in the integration of colonial and indigenous practices through trade, they

adapted means to placate their resulting ideological tensions. The most significant findings of the Fort Willshire project were the discovery of beads and faunal material, since these materials attested to economic and ideological changes in culture. They also illustrated global, regional, and specific interactions that changed the lives of both colonial and indigenous populations.

Since the contact period at Fort Willshire was a concrete time frame of rapid change, it is ideal for studying the changes within Xhosa and British history and the overall nature of trade and interaction on the Eastern Cape frontier. Although a significant force in the region and a catalyst for indigenous change, the Fort Willshire trade fairs were just a small part of the history on the Keiskamma cultural landscape. The fall of the Ngqika chiefdom and Ngqika's loss of control over the area signaled a change of chiefdoms in the area. As an artifact, the oral traditions in the valley illustrate this change. While the local preserved traditions document official Gqunukhwebe history, in the valley there are few oral accounts of the Ngqika Xhosa, Chief Sandile, or the times of the Fort Willshire fairs. The oral traditions provide explanations of the intersection between indigenous ideological domains, changing political relations, religious affiliations, and shifting economic spheres.

Fort Willshire was most important for its role in the economic development of the region, which was a process of monetization that reoccurred around the world. A comparative model to other contact areas, the changes in economic systems due to contact and trade at this site revealed that changes in the supply of material goods could significantly impact the relational aspects of exchange and indigenous societies.

By studying the economy of the Nigerian Tiv, Bohannon (1955, 1959) defined a model of spheres of exchange (also see Piot 1991). Similar to the interpretation of the Fort Willshire project, he observed that money for the Tiv served as a means to standardize the value of goods to a common scale. As beads at Fort Willshire provided a standardize measurement of trade materials, colonial currencies in Nigeria offered regulating means for defining valued goods. The introduction of these specific monetary equivalents had the same effects in both regions. Bohannon claimed that the disappearance of traditional spheres for the Tiv was due to European contact and the introduction of colonial currencies.

Similar changes occurred in China. Like the British at Fort Willshire, the Chinese used trade, exotic goods, and strategies of economic control to submit other Asian people to their political authority. In northern Southeast Asia between the third century BC and the fourteenth century AD, the Chinese tried to take control of the regions south of the Yangzi River (Wicks 1992). The expansion of China's tributary trade dramatically affected monetary changes in Vietnam, Yunnan, and other parts of Southeast Asia.

Similar to the British impact on indigenous people at Fort Willshire, the Chinese presented these populations with an opportunity to enter international trade systems. They also supplied the materials for coinage and local currencies. The port areas in particular offered goods such as pearls, rhinoceros horns, king-fisher feathers, elephant tusks, silver, copper, gold and silk. Like the Chief Ngqika and the certain British traders at Fort Willshire, according to Wicks (1992), Chinese officials often used their control over international trade for personal gain. Tax collections, gift giving, and bribes were

commonplace. When leaders were dissatisfied with their benefits, they sometimes reverted to force and violence.

Both the Eastern Cape frontier of South Africa and ports along Chinese borders represent similar models of how trade and economic interaction are used as political tools to gain power over regional resources. They reveal how individuals get pulled into the dominant system as a result of their individual interests and the competition for wealth. They show how culture changes when new resources are introduced into already established economic systems.

A pattern of change, this model also occurred in the Americas. Colonial populations took advantage of the well-established wampum exchange network in New England to gain economic and political control of the Iroquois and Eastern Algonkian. The wampum or tabular beads were manufactured and used by the Iroquois and Eastern Algonkian to serve ceremonial purposes, represent political relations, and as a medium of exchange (Speck 1919). As a means of currency, the wampum was used to pay tribute, negotiate peace during times of war, solidify marriage agreements, and trade for needed goods. For the Dutch, the trade of wampum meant access to highly valued furs. The Dutch tried to take control over the wampum trade as a way to cut out the middleman, appropriate land, and control local resources. By pursuing these goals, colonial people chipped away at the processes of indigenous reciprocity, the exchanges of wampum to maintain social and political equilibrium.

Like the glass seed beads that defined trade in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, the wampum was a portable means of currency. Preferring the wampum to corn and setting aside coins for European markets, the Bay Colony officially defined the small

beads as legal tender in 1637. Like the Xhosa, Indigenous bead makers began to grow dependent on European trade goods. With that dependence came subjugation from British rules and regulations. Any violations were fined through wampum fees.

When the value of wampum fell in the region, Native Americans experienced changes that were similar to those that emerged around Fort Willshire during the fall of bead values. Although it was the Native American population and not the British that flooded the markets with wampum to obtain colonial goods, they were the ones who found themselves isolated from the markets when the demand for wampum fell. Since they were dependent on colonial markets and goods, they were forced to trade land, labor, and other resources to fulfill their needs. Tension increased between different chiefdoms, leaders faced violent consequences, and individuals were forced to live closer together and adapt sedentary lifestyles. Like the Eastern Cape, famine and disease soon followed changes in settlement patterns. Native Americans faced the same consequences of culture change as the Xhosa did on the Eastern Cape frontier. Through trade relations and economic manipulations, they found their indigenous way of life altered and their political leverage dissipated by colonial forces.

By comparing the events at Fort Willshire to trade relations in Nigeria, China, America, and around the globe, it seems clear that this model of culture change reoccurred many times amongst several different people. The process of monetization was a global process. It was a common political tool to gain power over certain regions, gain access to resources, and control specific populations. The success of this process was due to the benefits that individuals received at the expense of the interests of their chiefdoms, tribes, or ethnic affiliations. Also in the process of economic change,

ideological, symbolic, and religious changes faced tensions that were resolved in unique indigenous ways. The research at Fort Willshire in particular highlighted the indigenous interaction between economic and political changes and ideological and symbolic responses to their incorporation into a global system.

Although the Fort Willshire project provided insight into the nineteenth century economic and social relations between the Xhosa and the British, it was merely a glimpse into the events at the fairs and in the region. While a wealth of data was collected from different sources, the data still seems to represent a small fraction of what is still out there. Further work needs to be done before we begin to exhaust the information from these multiple sources. The surveys and preliminary work provided by this dissertation revealed that the Fort Willshire site and the surrounding locations have much more archaeological data below the ground. Since Gqunukhwebe oral traditions survived in the area, most likely Ngqika oral traditions have survived in areas outside of the Middledrift region. More traders and local missionaries most likely kept journals and letters that would only surface during prolonged and extensive archival research.

Despite the wealth of archaeological material still left *in situ* and the uncollected oral traditions in areas outside of the study area, this project has presented a wealth of insight. By maintaining a highly selective sample in the region guided by specific research questions, the project has uncovered information that defined the trade fair area, identified some specialized skills related to processing trade goods, described everyday activities of traders apart from trade, and highlighted the importance of beads to the success of the fairs.



The oral traditions have contributed to placing indigenous meanings on the landscape, identifying activity areas and settlements, and describing the absence of certain markers in the material assemblage. They have described migration patterns and political relations characteristic of the region during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They have also played a critical role in helping me construct interpretations of the landscape and understand the historical relationships between the Xhosa and colonial peoples. Oral traditions provided significant cultural insights that were otherwise unattainable through the archaeological record alone.

The archaeological material, oral traditions, and archival sources all provided unique insights for the interpretation of the Fort Willshire trade fairs and the history of the Eastern Cape frontier. The contributions of the Fort Willshire project to historical archaeology lie in the use of multiple sources to obtain more complex understandings of the past.

Historical archaeology is a growing discipline around the world. While it is practiced in places such as India (Dhavalikar 1999), Australia (Mackay and Karskens 1999, Woodhouse 1993, Russell 1993, Young 1985), New Zealand (Ritchie 1991), Ireland (Orser 2000, 2001), the Caribbean (Armstrong 1998, Agorsah 1994, 1996), and various other parts of Africa (Posnansky and Van Dantzig 1976, Hall 1991, Winer 1994, Schrire 1987, 1988, DeCorse 1998), it has largely been influenced by American traditions. The discipline has thus focused primarily on colonial populations or colonial material culture.

My hopes for the future of historical archaeology as a global discipline lie in our unique capabilities to work with a variety of sources, constructing interpretations based

on comparative global models, and to consider ways of addressing previously overlooked populations in the historical record. Historical archaeology is the practice of archaeology in which historical sources, including oral traditions, affect the interpretation of an anthropological research problem. The contribution of my research to historical archaeology lies in its use of both symbolic and materialistic theoretic perspectives, a multi-methodological approach, and consideration of what needs attention in the South African historiography.

APPENDIX A LICENCED TRADERS AT FORT WILLSHIRE  
(Beck, R. 1987 *The Legalization and Development of Trade on the Cape Frontier, 1817-1830*)

Licence Number	Last Name	First Name	Residence	Age in 1820	Date of Licence	Occupation
1	Testard	John	Fort Willshire	?	5 Aug 1824	?
2	Howard	John H.	Fort Willshire	17	6 Aug 1824	Trader
3	Rhodes	Joseph	Grahamstown	45	9 Aug 1824	Watchmaker
4	Wallace	James	Grahamstown	24	9 Aug 1824	Gardener
5	Wichman	Peter	Grahamstown	45	9 Aug 1824	Tailor
6	Thompson	William Rowland	Grahamstown	?	11 Aug 1824	Merchant, Storekeeper
7	Gardiner	Thomas P.	Grahamstown	?	11 Aug 1824	?
8	Lewis	David	Grahamstown	?	11 Aug 1824	?
9	Collett	John (James)	Grahamstown	21	1 Aug 1824	Trader
10	Howse	James	Grahamstown	20	11 Aug 1824	?
11	Dale	Christopher	Grahamstown	31	12 Aug 1824	Piano tuner
12	Hobson	William C.	Stony Vale	13	13 Aug 1824	?
13	Brown	John	Chertsey Vale	28	16 Aug 1824	Farmer
14	McKenny	John	Grahamstown	?	17 Aug 1824	?
15	Stanley	John	Trentham	39	20 Aug 1824	Manchester Merchant
16?	Sullivan	John	Grahamstown	25	23 Feb 1825	Carpenter
16?	Thackway	John Jr.	Stony Vale	18	20 Aug 1824	?
17	O'Conner	Robert	Stony Vale	16	21 Aug 1824	?
18	Thackway	William Sr.	Grahamstown	40	21 Aug 1824	Agricultural implement maker
19	Bond	William	Grahamstown	52	23 Aug 1824	Farmer
20	Bland	Richard	Grahamstown	13	23 Aug 1824	?
21	Bauman	Louis	Grahamstown	?	23 Aug 1824	Sewart(?)
22	Mundie	James	Grahamstown	24	27 Aug 1824	Farmer
23	Kew	Patrick	Grahamstown	27	27 Oct 1824	Tailor
24	Hazell	William	Grahamstown	41	1 Sept 1824	Butcher
25	Frayne	Percival	Scanlin's Party	23	2 Sept 1824	Wheelwright
26	Driver	Edward	Nottingham Party	23	3 Sept 1824	Grocer
27	McCallagan	John	Grahamstown	?	6 Sept 1824	?
28	van Rooyen	D. W. Jr.	Grahamstown	?	6 Sept 1824	?

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29	Stone	Charles	Grahamstown	?	6 Sept 1824	?
30	Lucas	Frederick	Grahamstown	17	6 Sept 1824	?
31	Joseph	George Edward	Grahamstown	?	6 Sept 1824	?
32	White	John	Collingham	18	7 Sept 1824	Ropemaker
33	Hyman	Charles	Hyman's Location	21	7 Sept 1824	?
34	King	John	Hyman's Location	23	7 Sept 1824	?
35	Staples	John	Grahamstown	22	9 Sept 1824	Farmer
36	Neate	William	Hyman's Location	22	13 Sept 1824	Tanner
37	Trollop	Stephen	Hyman's Location	17	13 Sept 1824	?
38	Trollop	Benjamin	Hyman's Location	16	13 Sept 1824	?
39	Bagot	Robert Wood	Grahamstown	56	13 Sept 1824	Captain, 47th Regiment
40	Crichton	John	Eiland's Kloof	?	13 Sept 1824	?
41	Trollop	William	Hyman's Location	22	13 Sept 1824	?
42	Potgieter	Solomon	Kerega River	?	16 Sept 1824	?
43	Goldswain	Jeremiah	Kowie	18	21 Sept 1824	Sawyer
44	Wilkie	Thomas	Kowie	?	22 Sept 1824	?
45	van Rooyen	D. Sr.	Klipgat	?	24 Sept 1824	?
46	Jonson	Jan	Grahamstown	?	27 Sept 1824	?
47	McKenzie	Archibald	Grahamstown	38	28 Sept 1824	Farmer
48	Shepherd	William	Grahamstown	33	4 Oct 1824	Packer
49	Hall	David	Grahamstown	32	4 Oct 1824	?
50	Denton	William	Richardson's Location	27	4 Oct 1824	2nd Life Guards
51	Thackway	William Jr.	Grahamstown	11	9 Oct 1824	?
52						
53	Dixie	Philip	Grahamstown	32	11 Oct 1824	Smith
54	Bainbridge	Thomas	Salem Hills	39	11 Oct 1824	Tailor
55	Kidd	James	Grahamstown	24	12 Oct 1824	Fur skinner
56	Curtis	John	Grahamstown	27	13 Oct 1824	Sawyer
57	Howard	Thomas	Grahamstown	?	13 Oct 1824	Servant
58	Austin	John	Grahamstown	24	14 Oct 1824	Baker
59	Hobson	David	Grahamstown	22	16 Oct 1824	Farmer

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60	Goodes	Joseph	Grahamstown	31	16 Oct 1824	Plumber
61	Warner	Henry	Grahamstown	37	19 Oct 1824	Basketmaker
62	Ratibone	James	Grahamstown	22	19 Oct 1824	Carpenter
63	Rafferty	John	Grahamstown	25	19 Oct 1824	Saddler, Harnessmaker
64	Allen	Samuel	Grahamstown	32	20 Oct 1824	Gardener
65	Dold	John	Grahamstown	22	23 Oct 1824	Shoemaker
66	Poigleier	Martinus Jacobus	Grahamstown	?	25 Oct 1824	?
67	Schippers	Piet	Grahamstown	?	25 Oct 1824	?
68	Hallam	George	Grahamstown	?	25 Oct 1824	?
69	King	Thomas	Salem	41	27 Oct 1824	Carpenter
70	Roes	David	Beauty Vale	?	27 Oct 1824	Farmer, Cattle Dealer
71	Vokings	Henry	Grahamstown	38	28 Oct 1824	Shoemaker
72	Warner	Joseph	Grahamstown	12	28 Oct 1824	?
73	Fitzgerald	James	Grahamstown	27	28 Oct 1824	Farmer
74	Wilkie	James	Grahamstown	?	30 Oct 1824	?
75	Armstrong	John	Grahamstown	30	30 Oct 1824	Shoemaker
76	Zitzman	Lodewyk	Karrega river	?	5 Nov 1824	?
77	Keivy	John	Grahamstown	34	8 Nov 1824	Gardener
78	Orton	Robert	Grahamstown	?	8 Nov 1824	?
79	Warren	James	James Location	14	8 Nov 1824	?
80	Page	Daniel Jr.	Old Blue Krantz	?	8 Nov 1824	?
81	Attwell	William	Salem Hills	22	8 Nov 1824	Baker
82	Wakeford	Thomas	Grahamstown	?	8 Nov 1824	?
83	Jones	William Brooks	Grahamstown	?	8 Nov 1824	?
84	Shaw	John Sr.	Grobelaars Kloof	48	9 Nov 1824	?
85	Kidwell	Alexander	Grahamstown	37	9 Nov 1824	Shopman
86	Overa	Thomas	Green Fountain	24	9 Nov 1824	Farmer
87	Hoole	James	Grahamstown	29	10 Nov 1824	Harnessmaker
88	Keatley	Thomas	Grahamstown	?	10 Nov 1824	?
89	Satchwell	Richard M.	Tempe Vale	21	10 Nov 1824	Clerk
90	Lance	James	Grahamstown	31	10 Nov 1824	Shoemaker

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91	Gibson	Richard	Grahamstown	?	10 Nov 1824	Painter
92	Bester	Jacob Johannes	Palmet Fontein	?	12 Nov 1824	?
93	Mynhardt	Martenus	Rooy Draai	?	12 Nov 1824	?
94	Delport	Isaak Zirk	Blomfontein	?	12 Nov 1824	?
95	Delport	Johannes Hendrik	Blomfontein	?	12 Nov 1824	?
96	Drever	Caspar	Blomfontein	?	12 Nov 1824	?
97	Palmer	George	Nottingham Party	36	12 Nov 1824	Frameworker
98	Trotter	William	Grahamstown	33	15 Nov 1824	Farmer
99	King	Philip	New Gloucester	30	15 Nov 1824	Local preacher
100	Lyon	George	Grahamstown	46	15 Nov 1824	Farmer
101	Hewson	Thomas	Grahamstown	46	15 Nov 1824	Gunsmith
102	Fowler	William	Grahamstown	23	15 Nov 1824	Farmer
103	Norden	Benjamin	Grahamstown	21	16 Nov 1824	Canteen-keeper
104	Owen	William	Spanish Reed Place	40	17 Nov 1824	Farmer
105	Eccleshall	Richard	Grahamstown	?	17 Nov 1824	?
106	Brown	George	Clumber	?	20 Nov 1824	?
107	Keeton	Benjamin	Clumber	19	20 Nov 1824	?
108	Woest	Barend	Brakke Fontein	?	22 Nov 1824	Farmer
109	Penny	Charles	Grahamstown	33	22 Nov 1824	Bricklayer
110	Elliston	Francis	Clumber	?	22 Nov 1824	?
111	Hogg	William	Grahamstown	19	22 Nov 1824	?
112	Fair	John	Grahamstown	?	22 Nov 1824	?
113	Southey	George	DeBruin's Drift	44	26 Nov 1824	?
114	Hawkes	Frederick	Grahamstown	21	29 Nov 1824	Mason
115	Simpson	William	Charles Town	?	29 Nov 1824	?
116	Plaster	William	James Location	?	29 Nov 1824	?
117	Harris	Robert	Ford's Location	?	29 Nov 1824	?
118	Clayton	William	Richardson's Location	32	29 Nov 1824	?
119	Foulds	Henry	Clumber	22	29 Nov 1824	?
120	Ogilvie	William	Grahamstown	?	29 Nov 1824	Merchant, Blacksmith
121	Vermaak	Adriaan	Uitenhage	?	29 Nov 1824	?

APPENDIX A LICENCED TRADERS AT FORT WILLSHIRE  
(Beck, R. 1987 *The Legalization and Development of Trade on the Cape Frontier, 1817-1830*)

122?	Mehrtens	Seeba	Salem Hills	25	24 Jan 1825	Willowcutter
122?	Lotter	Jan George	Uitenhage	?	29 Nov 1824	?
123	Roe	Richard	Grahamstown	?	29 Nov 1824	?
124	Fleming	William	Grahamstown	?	30 Nov 1824	?
125	Still	Forbes	Cape Town	?	30 Nov 1824	Storekeeper
126	Field	Samuel	Grahamstown	?	30 Nov 1824	?
127	de Klerk	Barend Jacobus	Bruinje's Hoogte	?	3 Dec 1824	?
128	Brolo	Carlo	Bruinje's Hoogte	?	3 Dec 1824	?
129	Constable	Moses	Grahamstown	?	3 Dec 1824	?
130	James	Samuel	James Location	30	3 Dec 1824	Carpenter
131	Ford	John	Vallace	16	3 Dec 1824	Wheelwright
132	Freemantle	Richard Jr.	Grahamstown	?	3 Dec 1824	?
133	Lee	William Jr.	Grahamstown	18	3 Dec 1824	?
134	Shaw	Robert	Grabbeelaars Kloof	?	3 Dec 1824	?
135	Deale	William	Grahamstown	?	28 Dec 1824	?
136	Wailbridge	H.	Cape Town	?	28 Dec 1824	?
137	Tilly	John	Cape Town	?	28 Dec 1824	Merchant
138	Ford	Edward	Vallace	54	3 Jan 1825	Farmer
139	Hitzeroth	Hendrick	Grahamstown	?	3 Jan 1825	?
140	Lee	Charles	Grahamstown	?	4 Jan 1825	?
141	Wild	Robert	Grahamstown	21	4 Jan 1825	School master
142	Davis	John	Grahamstown	?	8 Jan 1825	?
143	Talbot	John	Salem	?	14 Jan 1825	?
144	Ayton	William	Kowie	?	24 Jan 1825	?
145						
146	Dicks	James	Vallace	38	24 Jan 1825	?
147	Hartley	William	Nottingham Party	24	24 Jan 1825	Blacksmith
148	Cardon	Thomas	Grahamstown	?	7 Feb 1825	?
149	Meley	Peter	Grahamstown	?	7 Feb 1825	?
150	Fagan	Peter	Grahamstown	39	8 Feb 1824	Farmer
151	Dogherty	Niel	Grahamstown	?	8 Feb 1825	Tanner

APPENDIX A LICENCED TRADERS AT FORT WILLSHIRE  
(Beck, R. 1987 *The Legalization and Development of Trade on the Cape Frontier, 1817-1830*)

152	Hancock	James	Grahamstown	43	12 Feb 1825	China Painter
153	Manley	Thomas	Seversage's Location	42	12 Feb 1825	Farmer
154	Heley	Edward	Salem Hills	?	12 Feb 1825	?
155	Farrington	John	Thorn Valley	?	14 Feb 1825	?
156	Keavy	Matthew	Grahamstown	34	14 Feb 1825	Gardener
157	Simpson	Thomas	Charles Town	48	14 Feb 1825	Carpenter
158	Cawood	Joshua	Seversage's Location	16	15 Feb 1825	?
159	Daniel	Peter	Groblelaar's Kloof	42	16 Feb 1825	Jeweler
160	Manley	Ralph	Seversage's Party	12	19 Feb 1825	?
161	Hanger	Edward Henry	Grahamstown	30	19 Feb 1825	Carpenter
162	Ralph	Joseph	Grahamstown	27	23 Feb 1825	Royal Navy Pensioner
163						
164	Trollop	John	Hymen's Location	22	8 March 1825	?
165	Payne	John	Grahamstown	34	8 March 1825	Carpenter
166	Dennison	George	Graaff Reinet	36	8 March 1825	Frameworker
167	Wood	Charles	Grahamstown	30	9 March 1825	Carpenter
168	Penny	William	Grahamstown	29	9 March 1825	Bricklayer
169	Biggs	William	Grahamstown	42	10 March 1825	Mason
170	Fitzgerald	Michael	Grahamstown	30	10 March 1825	Farmer
171	Cawood	John	Caffre Drift	18	11 March 1825	Fisherman
172	Cawood	William	Caffre Drift	19	11 March 1825	Fisherman
173	Larkham	Robert	Grahamstown	18	11 March 1825	?
174	Brady	Robert	Grahamstown	?	12 March 1825	Carpenter
175	Jenkins	James	Leversage's Party	28	21 March 1825	?
176	Bold	Peter	Grahamstown	18	21 March 1825	?
177	Evans	John	Grahamstown	30	23 March 1825	Cotton spinner
178	Smith	Joseph	Grahamstown	18	23 March 1825	Farmer
179	Marr	John	Grahamstown	?	28 March 1825	?
180	Rayner	William	Grahamstown	26	5 April 1825	Hatter
181	Timlett	James	Grahamstown	?	16 April 1825	?
182	Palmer	Thomas	Grahamstown	32	19 April 1825	Leather Dresser



APPENDIX A LICENCED TRADERS AT FORT WILLSHIRE  
(Beck, R. 1987 *The Legalization and Development of Trade on the Cape Frontier, 1817-1830*)

183	Phillips	John	Grahamstown	?	19 April 1825	?
184	Painter	Richard	Grahamstown	?	25 April 1825	?
185	Thomas	Benjamin	Grahamstown	?	25 April 1825	?
186	Mountford	William	Wilmot's Vale	33	28 April 1825	Baker
187	Flynn	Daniel	Grahamstown	42	29 April 1825	Farmer
188	Webb	Christopher	Grahamstown	34	30 April 1825	Shoemaker
189	Enlis	William	Grahamstown	?	30 April 1824	?
190	Keeling	John	Grahamstown	?	30 April 1825	?
191	McCallagan	J. Jr.	Grahamstown	?	9 May 1825	?
192	Kempster	Thomas	Hermannus Kraal	40	19 May 1825	Bricklayer
193	Herman	Lawrence	Cape Town	?	6 June 1825	?
194	de Wet	Clement	Cape Town	?	6 June 1825	?
195	Piper	Thomas Bell	Grahamstown	36	13 June 1825	?
196	Sacher	John	Grahamstown	?	14 June 1825	?
197	Pierce	Richard	Grahamstown	40	27 June 1825	Baker

# APPENDIX B KEY TO THE ROOMS OF THE KEISKAMMA BARRACKS

## ACCOMMODATION

### A

No 1 to No 3 (Commanding)	2 Officers
No 4 to No 6	1
No 7 to No 10	1
No 11 to No 15	1
No 16 to No 19	1
No 20 to No 22	1
No 23 to No 25	2
Total	9 Officers

### B

No 5 Privates)	15 (N.C.O.s and
No 6 to No 8	15

### C

No 1	16
No 2	8
No 3	16

### D

No 4	17
No 5 and 6	19
No 7	18
No 8	17
No 9 and 10	19

### B

No 1	Officers' Mess Room
No 2	Officers' Mess Pantry
No 3	Officers' Mess Kitchen
No 4	Officers' Mess Cellar
No 9	Guard Room

### C

No 4	Commise rr. Provision Store
No 5	Commise rr. Spirit Store
No 6 & 7	Issuer Quarters

### D

No 1	Hospital Ward
No 2	Hospital Surgery
No 3	Hospital Serfts'. Quarters

### E

1 to 4	Officers Privies
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### F

Cells
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### G

1	Hospital Kitchen
2	Hospital Privy
3	Hospital Dead House

### H

No 1 and 2	Canteen
No 3	Stables
No 4	Canteen

### K

No 1	Stables
No 2	Officers' Stable
No 3	Officers' Stable

### L

N.C.O. and Privates	Cook House
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### M

No 1	Soldiers' Privy
No 2	Womens' Privy

### T

No 1	Stable
No 2	Artillery and Engineer Store

### N

Magazine
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## APPENDIX C PIPE STEM DATA

Table C1: Pipe stem measurement conversions from mm to inches.  
([www.convert-me.com](http://www.convert-me.com))

Mm	Converted inches	Average bore diameter (inches)	Approximate Date
1.2	0.04724	3/64	Post 1800
1.3	0.05118	3/64	Post 1800
1.4<	0.05512	4/64	1750-1800
1.5<	0.05906	4/64	1750-1800
1.6<	0.06299	4/64	1750-1800
1.7<	0.06693	4/64	1750-1800
1.8<	0.07087	5/64	1720-1750
1.9<	0.07480	5/64	1720-1750
2.0	0.07874	5/64	1720-1750
2.1	0.08268	5/64	1720-1750
2.2	0.08661	6/64	1680-1720
2.3<	0.09055	6/64	1680-1720
2.4	0.09449	6/64	1680-1720
2.5	0.09843	6/64	1680-1720

(<) Indicates the sizes of the pipe stems found at Fort Willshire.

Table C2: Data from Deetz (1996).

Methods based on the Harrington pipe stem dating technique.

Average bore diameters (inches)	Average bore diameters (decimal inches)	Time Periods
1/64	0.015625	post 1800
2/64	0.03125	post 1800
3/64	0.0468	post 1800
4/64	0.0625	1750-1800
5/64	0.0781	1720-1750
6/64	0.09375	1680-1720
7/64	0.1094	1650-1680
8/64	0.125	1620-1650
9/64	0.1406	1590-1620

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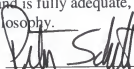
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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Flordeliz T. Bugarin was born in California and is the daughter of Criselda A. Bugarin and Temotio E. Bugarin. She has one sister, Marie A. Bugarin. Growing up the daughter of a U.S. Navy officer, Florie moved every two years of her life and learned how to adjust to different places. This probably prepared her for her love of travel and different cultures. She received her undergraduate degree in anthropology from the University of California at Berkeley. Go Bears! This is where she first learned about archaeology from inspiring people like Jim Deetz and Kent Lightfoot. She also went to South Africa for the first time. This is when she discovered all the wonderful things about this country, including the breath-taking scenery, the complex history, and the incredible people. Despite its problems, South Africa has so much potential. This is what inspired Florie to go to graduate school and get her master's degree in anthropology. She continued her anthropology studies at the University of Florida. Go Gators! With the patient guidance of Peter Schmidt, her chairperson, members of her committee including Hunt Davis, Steve Brandt, and Mike Heckenburger, and the support and love from her friends and family, she earned her Doctor of Philosophy degree in 2002.

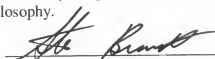
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Peter R. Schmidt, Chairman  
Professor of Anthropology


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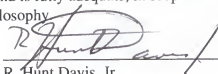
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Michael J. Heckenberger  
Assistant Professor of Anthropology

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This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Anthropology College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

August 2002

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